

Representatives and Senators: Trends in Member Characteristics Since 1945

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Summary

Questions about the characteristics of Members of Congress, including their age, education, previous occupations, and other descriptors, are of ongoing interest to Members, congressional staff, and constituents. Some of these questions may be asked in the context of representation, in efforts to evaluate the extent to which Members of Congress reflect their constituencies and the nation at large. In other instances, questions arise about how the characteristics of Members have changed over time, which may speak in part to the history of Congress.

This report provides profiles of Senators and Representatives in selected Congresses since 1945. It includes data based on Representatives and Senators serving on the first day of the 79th – 113th Congresses for several demographic characteristics. The characteristics discussed include age, including the oldest and youngest Members of the House and Senate; sex; previous occupation; race and ethnicity; education; religion; and military service.

Following summaries of each characteristic, the report provides a number of tables that present the detailed data by the category on which the summaries are based. All data tables appear in the “Member Characteristics Data Tables” section.

In several categories, the report provides data on the U.S. population that may be comparable to data available on Members of Congress. A detailed discussion of the methods used to develop the data presented in the report, and efforts to provide comparison between Member characteristics and the American public, is provided in an **Appendix**.

The disclosure of details of a Member’s race, education, previous occupation, or other characteristics has been voluntary, and no official, authoritative source has collected Member characteristic data in a consistent manner over time. Member data provided in this report are based on commercially collected information. Comparative data on the U.S. population are taken from the Census Bureau, and are supplemented by private sources.

Compared to Representatives and Senators in 1945, Members in 2013 are

- older;
- more likely to identify a religious affiliation;
- include more women; and
- include members of minority racial and ethnic groups in greater numbers.

The data presented in this report suggest that since the 79th Congress, Members have had high levels of education, and generally worked in professional positions prior to coming to Congress. The number of Members who previously served in the military has risen and fallen, which may mirror the levels of service in the broader population.

Other Congressional Research Service reports also provide data and information on the characteristics of Members. These include CRS Report R42964, *Membership of the 113th Congress: A Profile*; CRS Report R41647, *Membership of the 112th Congress: A Profile*; and CRS Report R41545, *Congressional Careers: Service Tenure and Patterns of Member Service, 1789-2013*. Due to differences in data collection or characterization, data in other studies on Member characteristics may differ from those presented in this report.

Contents

Characteristics of Representatives and Senators	3
Age	3
Representatives	3
Senators	3
Sex	4
Representatives	5
Senators	5
Previous Occupation	6
Representatives	7
Senators	8
Race and Ethnicity	9
Representatives	9
Senators	10
Education	10
Religion	12
Representatives	13
Senators	14
Military Service	15
Concluding Observations	16
Member Characteristics Data Tables	17
Age	17
Sex	19
Previous Occupation	21
Race/Ethnicity	23
Education	26
Religion	28
Military Service	35

Figures

Figure 1. Median Age of Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population	3
Figure 2. Women in the House and Senate, 79 th -113 th Congresses	5
Figure 3. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives and Senators	6
Figure 4. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives, 79 th – 113 th Congresses	7
Figure 5. Frequently Reported Occupations of Senators, 79 th – 113 th Congresses	8
Figure 6. Race and Ethnicity of Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population	10
Figure 7. Four or More Years of College Completed by Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population, 79 th – 113 th Congresses and U.S. Population, Selected Years	11
Figure 8. Religious Affiliation of Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population	14
Figure 9. Christian Denominations Identified by Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population	15
Figure 10. Military Service by Representatives, Senators, 79 th – 113 th Congresses, and U.S. Population, Selected Years	16

Tables

Table 1. 79 th – 113 th Congresses, and Number of Members Who Took Seats on the First Day	2
Table 2. Age of Representatives, Oldest and Youngest Representatives at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	17
Table 3. Age of Senators, Oldest and Youngest Senators at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	18
Table 4. Female and Male Representatives, at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	19
Table 5. Female and Male Senators, at the Start of 79 th – 113 th Congresses	20
Table 6. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives, at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	21
Table 7. Frequently Reported Occupations of Senators, at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	22
Table 8. Race and Ethnicity of Representatives at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	23
Table 9. Race and Ethnicity of Senators at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	25
Table 10. High School and Undergraduate Completion of Representatives at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	26
Table 11. High School and Undergraduate Completion of Senators at the Start of Selected the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	27
Table 12. Representatives and Senators Specifying a Religious Affiliation at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	28
Table 13. Religious Affiliation of Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population	29
Table 14. Denominations of Christian Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population	30
Table 15. Religious Affiliation of Representatives at the Start of the 79 th – 113 th Congresses	30
Table 16. Denominations of Christian-Affiliated Representatives, 79 th – 113 th Congresses	32
Table 17. Religious Affiliation of Senators, 79 th – 113 th Congresses	33
Table 18. Denominations of Christian-Affiliated Senators, 79 th – 113 th Congresses	34
Table 19. Military Service by Representatives and Senators, 79 th – 113 th Congresses and U.S. Population	35

Appendixes

Appendix. Developing Member Data	37
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Contacts

Author Information	41
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Questions about the characteristics of Members of Congress, including their age, education, previous occupations, and other descriptors, are of ongoing interest to Members, congressional staff, and constituents. Some of these questions may be asked in the context of representation, in efforts to evaluate the extent to which Members of Congress reflect their constituencies and the nation at large. In other instances, questions arise as to how the characteristics of Members have changed over time, which may speak in part to the history of Congress.

A challenge of discussing Member characteristics in a manner that allows comparison across the history of Congress is the identification of characteristics and reliable data on those characteristics that are collected in a consistent manner over time. No government entity has collected data on Members in a consistent manner for all Congresses. Congressional sources, including entries in the online *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*,¹ or the print versions of the biennial *Official Congressional Directory*,² are compiled by the House and Senate, based on information reported by Members. Some academic and journalistic sources³ provide data on a limited number of Member characteristics over a variety of time periods. While these sources provide some information, they do not report various descriptive characteristics for all Members or all Congresses in a consistent manner.⁴ Biographies created by Members for official or campaign purposes are another potential source; those are not readily retrievable for all Members in the Congresses for which this report provides data, and do not report various characteristics for all Members in a uniform manner.

CRS Reports on Members of Congress

The Congressional Research Service has a number of reports on characteristics of Members of Congress. Others include CRS Report R42964, *Membership of the 113th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning; CRS Report R41545, *Congressional Careers: Service Tenure and Patterns of Member Service, 1789-2013*, by Matthew E. Glassman and Amber Hope Wilhelm; and CRS Report R41283, *First-Term Members of the House of Representatives and Senate, 64th—113th Congresses*, by Jennifer E. Manning and R. Eric Petersen.

This report provides profiles of Senators and Representatives based on selected characteristics since 1945. Data are drawn from the CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection

¹ <http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>.

² See, e.g., U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Printing, *2009-2010 Official Congressional Directory, 112th Congress, 112th Cong., 1st sess.*, S.Pub. 112-12 (Washington: GPO, 2011). Links to directories for the 105th-112th Congresses are available from the Government Printing Office (GPO) <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=CDIR>.

³ Norman J. Ornstein, Thomas E. Mann, Michael J. Malbin and Andrew Rugg, "Vital Statistics on Congress: Data on the U.S. Congress – A Joint Effort from Brookings and the American Enterprise Institute," <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/07/vital-statistics-congress-mann-ornstein>; Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Faith on the Hill: The Religious Composition of the 113th Congress*, January 2, 2013, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/11/16/faith-on-the-hill-the-religious-composition-of-the-113th-congress/>; Eric Lichtblau, "Economic Slide Took a Detour At Capitol Hill," *New York Times*, December 27, 2011, p. 1; and Peter Whoriskey, "Growing Wealth Widens Distance Between Lawmakers and Constituents," *Washington Post*, December 26, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/growing-wealth-widens-distance-between-lawmakers-and-constituents/2011/12/05/gIQR7D6IP_story.html.

⁴ The Congressional Research Service has for several years produced profile reports covering individual Congresses, including CRS Report R42964, *Membership of the 113th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning, and CRS Report R41647, *Membership of the 112th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning. These reports are updated throughout each Congress, and may provide different information from that provided here, due in part to changes in membership from the first day of a Congress, or because those reports rely on sources and information about Members that are different from the sources and information used to develop this report. Reports addressing some Member characteristics in the 94th, 96th, and 99th-110th Congresses are available to Congressional offices upon request.

(hereafter CQ Press), a subscription database that provides data on Members and a range of characteristics. Data provided in this report are based on the number of Representatives and Senators who took seats on the first day of a new Congress. The CQ Press database does not contain information on Members who have served as Delegates⁵ or Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico.⁶ **Table 1** provides the number of Members who took seats on the first day of the 79th – 113th Congresses and the years those Congresses met. The report provides data on the following characteristics: age, including the oldest and youngest Members of the House and Senate; sex; previous occupation; race and ethnicity; education; religion; and military service.

Table 1. 79th – 113th Congresses, and Number of Members Who Took Seats on the First Day

Congress	Years	Representatives	Senators	Congress	Years	Representatives	Senators
79 th	1945 - 1946	435	96	97 th	1981 - 1982	435	100
80 th	1947 - 1948	433	96	98 th	1983 - 1984	434	100
81 st	1949 - 1950	434	96	99 th	1985 - 1986	435	100
82 nd	1951 - 1952	435	96	100 th	1987 - 1988	435	100
83 rd	1953 - 1954	435	96	101 st	1989 - 1990	433	100
84 th	1955 - 1956	435	96	102 nd	1991 - 1992	435	100
85 th	1957 - 1958	433	96	103 rd	1993 - 1994	435	100
86 th	1959 - 1960	435	98	104 th	1995 - 1996	435	100
87 th	1961 - 1962	437	100	105 th	1997 - 1998	435	100
88 th	1963 - 1964	434	100	106 th	1999 - 2000	434	100
89 th	1965 - 1966	435	100	107 th	2001 - 2002	435	100
90 th	1967 - 1968	435	100	108 th	2003 - 2004	434	100
91 st	1969 - 1970	435	100	109 th	2005 - 2006	435	100
92 nd	1971 - 1972	435	100	110 th	2007 - 2008	435	100
93 rd	1973 - 1974	434	100	111 th	2009 - 2010	434	98
94 th	1975 - 1976	435	100	112 th	2011 - 2012	435	100
95 th	1977 - 1978	435	100	113 th	2013 - 2014	433	100
96 th	1979 - 1980	434	100				

Source: CRS.

Notes: Calculations in this report are based on the number of Members who took seats on the first day of a Congress unless otherwise noted.

For each characteristic category, a summary is provided. In some categories, the report provides data on the U.S. population that may be comparable to data available on Members of Congress, as discussed in more detail below. Following the characteristic summaries, the report provides a number of tables that provide the detailed data by the category on which the summaries are based. All data tables appear in the “Member Characteristics Data Tables” section.

⁵ There are currently five Delegates to Congress, representing the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. For more information, see CRS Report R40555, *Delegates to the U.S. Congress: History and Current Status*, by Christopher M. Davis.

⁶ For more information, see CRS Report RL31856, *Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico*, by R. Eric Petersen.

A detailed discussion of the methods used to develop the data presented in the report, and efforts to provide comparison between Member characteristics and the American public, is provided in an **Appendix**. Due to differences in data collection or characterization, data in other studies on Member characteristics may differ from those presented in this report.

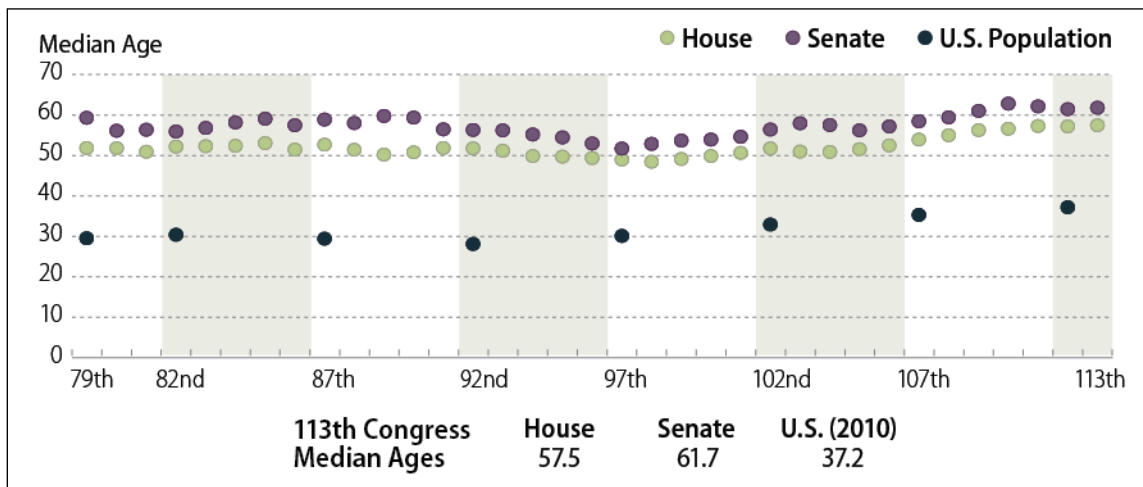
Characteristics of Representatives and Senators

Age

In general, the ages of Members of Congress and the U.S. population have increased slowly since 1945. **Figure 1** provides the median⁷ ages of Representatives and Senators in Congresses since 1945, and the U.S. population from the 1940-2010 decennial censuses. Data tables with the mean, or average, and median ages of Members and lists of the oldest and youngest Representatives and Senators, in Congresses since 1945 are provided in the “Age” section, below.

Figure 1. Median Age of Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population

First Day of 79th – 113th Congresses



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection decennial U.S. Censuses, 1940-2010, and CRS calculations.

Representatives

In the House, between the 79th and 98th Congresses, the ages of Members fluctuated narrowly. The lowest median age in the House, 48.4 years, was recorded in the 98th Congress. Thereafter, the median age of Representatives began gradually increasing. The 113th Congress held record highs for the House with median ages of 57.5 years for Representatives.

Senators

The median age of Senators fluctuated narrowly between the 79th and 97th Congresses when it reached a low of 51.7 years. The 110th Congress held a record high for the Senate with a median age of 62.8 years. In the 113th Congress, the median age of Senators was 61.7 years, a slight

⁷ The median is the midpoint at which half of the numbers in a list are higher, and the other half lower.

change over the previous two Congresses. The median age of the U.S. population in the 2010 census was 37.2 years.⁸

The significant age difference between the U.S. population and Representatives and Senators is explained in part by the scope of people counted in the United States. Census data provide information for all U.S. residents of any age from birth until death. To hold office in the House, the Constitution specifies that a Member must be at least 25 years old. A Senator must be at least 30 years of age. Median ages of Members of Congress are higher than in the U.S. population, since the congressional statistics are calculated on the basis of small numbers of adults in an age-restricted group.⁹

Sex

Until the early 20th Century, no women served in Congress. Nine decades later, the 113th Congress has the highest number of female Representatives and Senators ever to serve, but at levels far below that of the general population. **Figure 2** provides the distribution of female Members of Congress for Congresses since 1945, the distribution of men and women in each chamber in the 113th Congress,¹⁰ and the U.S. population, based on the 2010 census. Data on the percentage of female and male Representatives and Senators in Congresses since 1945 are provided in the “Sex” section, below.

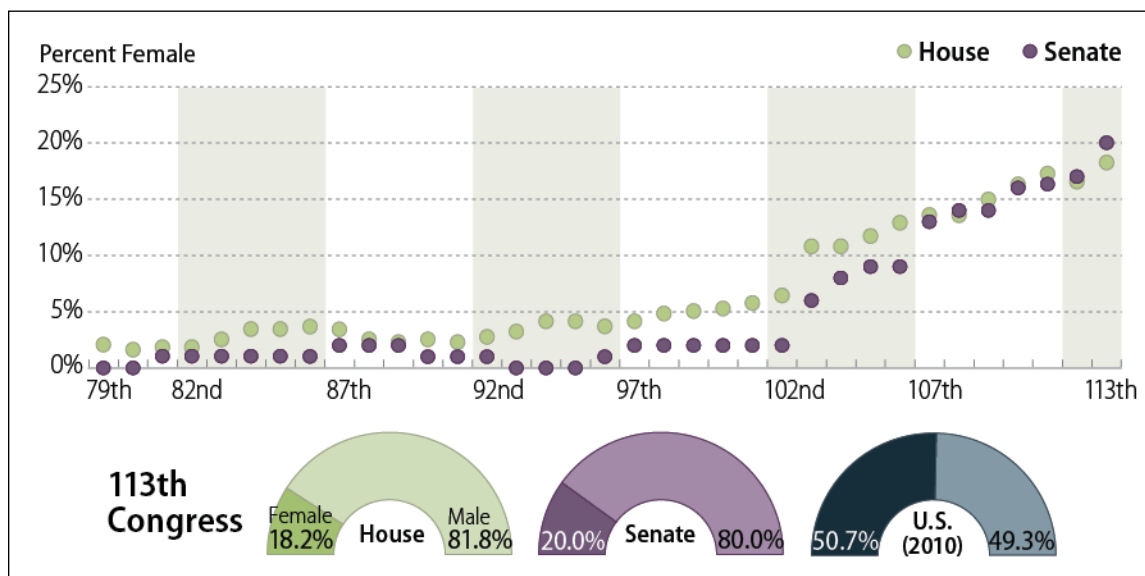
The first female to serve in the House, Jeanette Rankin of Montana, was elected to the 65th Congress (1917-1919). Although no women were elected to the 66th Congress (1919-1921), during which Congress proposed and the states ratified the 19th Amendment to the Constitution granting women the right to vote, women have served in the House in every Congress since.

In the Senate, the first female to serve was Rebecca Latimer Felton of Georgia, who was appointed to the Senate on October 3, 1922, following the death of Thomas E. Watson. Aged 87, she served for only 24 hours while the Senate was in session. The next female in the Senate, Hattie Caraway of Arkansas, was appointed on November 13, 1931, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband, Thaddeus H. Caraway. She became the first woman elected to the Senate on January 12, 1932, when she won special election for the remainder of the term and was reelected to two additional terms, serving in the Senate for a total of 14 years. With only a few exceptions, at least one female Senator has served in each Congress since then.

⁸ United States Census Bureau, *Age and Sex Composition: 2010*, 2010 Census Briefs, Washington, DC, May 2011, p. 5, at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-03.pdf>.

⁹ The Census Bureau generally reports the median age of the U.S. population in its standard, widely distributed summaries. This section discusses the median age of Members and the U.S. population for ease of comparability. Average and median ages of Representatives and Senators are provided in **Table 2** and **Table 3**, respectively.

¹⁰ Additional information on the number of women in Congress is available in the historical data section of: <http://womenincongress.house.gov/>; and U.S. House, Committee on House Administration and Office of the Clerk, *Women in Congress, 1917-2006* (Washington, GPO: 2006); CRS Report RL30261, *Women in the United States Congress, 1917-2013: Biographical and Committee Assignment Information, and Listings by State and Congress*, by Jennifer E. Manning and Ida A. Brudnick; and Jennifer L. Lawless, *Men Rule: The Continued Under-Representation of Women in U.S. Politics* (Washington: Women and Politics Institute, 2012).

Figure 2. Women in the House and Senate, 79th-113th CongressesHouse and Senate, 113th Congress, U.S. Population, 2010

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; U.S. Census Bureau; and CRS calculations.

According to the 2010 census, the total population is 50.7% female and 49.3% male.¹¹ According to the Census Bureau, there have been more females than males in the United States since the 1950 census.¹²

Representatives

The percentage of female Representatives has fluctuated since the 79th Congress. The House was more than 95% male until the 99th Congress. The percentage of women doubled, to 10.8%, in the 103rd Congress, before reaching nearly 15% at the beginning of the 109th Congress. With a few exceptions—most recently from the 111th Congress to the 112th Congress—the percentage of Representatives who are female on the first day of a Congress has generally increased from one Congress to the next.

Senators

Women did not hold 2% of the seats in the Senate until the 87th Congress, and did not surpass this until the beginning of the 103rd Congress, when their percentage tripled to 6.0%. The number of female Senators has remained steady or grown ever since, and membership in the 113th Congress is 20% female.

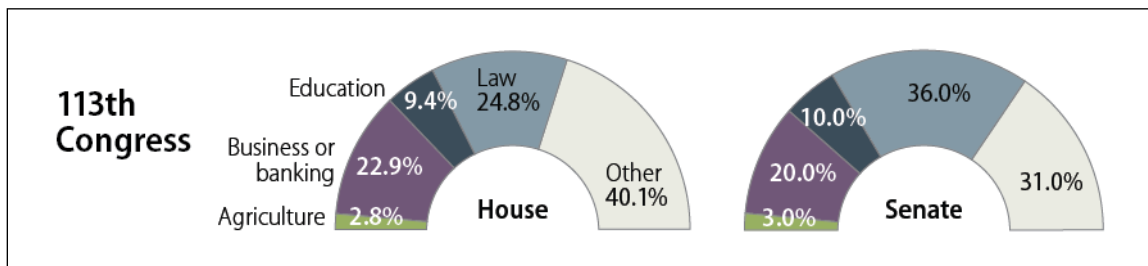
¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *Age and Sex Composition: 2010, 2010 Census Briefs*, Table 1. Population by Sex and Selected Age Groups: 2000 and 2010, issued May 2011, at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-03.pdf>.

¹² For a further historical comparison of gender composition, see U.S. Census Bureau, *Gender: 2000, Census 2000 Brief*, Figure 2. The Male-Female Ratio: 1900 to 2000, issued September 2001, at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-9.pdf>.

Previous Occupation

Representatives and Senators bring an array of work experiences with them to Congress. **Figure 3** provides a summary of previous occupations of Representatives and Senators in the 113th Congress.

Figure 3. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives and Senators



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; and CRS calculations.

Since 1945, careers in law and public service are common, but Members have also served as astronauts, entertainers, teachers, and practiced numerous trades.¹³ Representatives and Senators have generally similar occupational backgrounds. Most of the occupation data are categorized in the CQ Press data into one of 20 broad subcategories, including, among others: acting/entertainer; business or banking; journalism; law; public service/politics; and real estate.¹⁴

These and other categories provide a relatively simple way to summarize professional experiences for thousands of diverse Members who have served in Congresses since 1945. It is important to note that the CQ Press data provide an overview of pre-congressional careers, but leave some questions unanswered.

The CQ Press data provide up to five occupational categories for each Representative and Senator. This report provides data on the first—and in some cases, only—occupation provided by CQ Press. In the absence of additional information, however, it is unclear how or why these positions were listed, or why they were listed first when more than one occupation was provided. Finally, in some instances, the CQ Press data provide no information on occupation for some Members.

¹³ See, for example, David T. Canon, *Actors, Athletes, and Astronauts: Political Amateurs in the United States Congress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

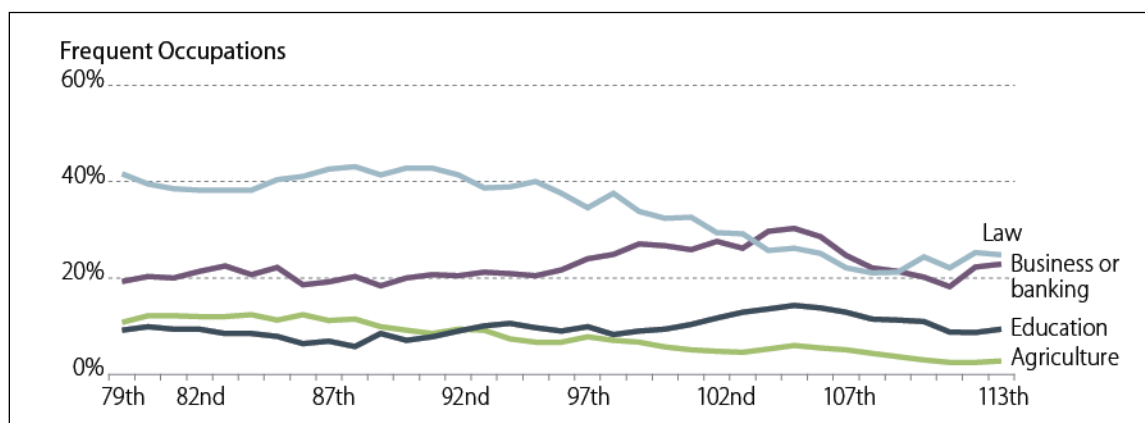
¹⁴ The complete list of pre-determined categories provided in the CQ Press search interface and codebook includes: any occupation; acting/entertainer; aeronautics; agriculture; business or banking; clergy; congressional aide; construction/building trades; education; engineering; journalism; labor leader; law; law enforcement; medicine; military; misc[ellaneous]; public service/ politics; real estate; and sports. It cannot be determined from available resources whether those categories have changed over time.

Voluntary categories, as they appear in the CQ Press database (with slight variations for spelling and punctuation), include: acting/entertainer; actor; aeronautics; agriculture; agricultural news service owner; Air Force officer; airline pilot; Army officer; at-risk youth mentorship program founder; bank CEO; business [and/or] banking; campaign and congressional aide; clergy; computers/technology; congressional aide; construction/building trades; county [government] administrator; deputy county sheriff; education; engineering; hospital administrator; gubernatorial aide; journalism; labor leader; law; law enforcement; lobbyist; medicine; military; misc[ellaneous]; newspaper reporter; nonprofit community activism org[anization] founder; private school fundraiser; professor; public service/politics; real estate attorney; real estate; religious school fundraiser; religious youth camp director; sports; state party Hispanic outreach director; and university president.

In addition, the CQ Press data do not provide detail about what facet of a profession a Member pursued, for how long, or whether he or she did so full-time or part-time. In some cases, CQ Press data identify a specific profession, such as Army officer or professor. These listings provide more detail than the broad categories noted above, but might also overlap with some other categories. As discussed above, a former congressional aide might also categorize his or her work as public service/politics. Due to the organization by CQ Press of Members' previously held elective office in a separate category outside the database, the extent of public service backgrounds as the previous occupation of Members may be significantly understated.¹⁵ In summary, it is important to note that this section provides an overview of Member occupation, but the source data do not necessarily reflect all of the occupations Members may have pursued prior to their congressional service.

Representatives

Figure 4. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives, 79th – 113th Congresses



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Representatives have diverse occupational backgrounds. As noted above, most primary occupations Representatives reported in the CQ Press data reflect pre-determined categories; others reflect customized titles apparently provided by Members or their staffs. Although the prominence of individual occupations varies by Congress, in general, five occupational categories provided by CQ Press were most commonly reported in the selected Congresses. These include: agriculture; business or banking; congressional aide; education; and law.

Law was the most commonly cited profession over time. Law has not uniformly dominated House Members' professional experience, however. As **Figure 4** shows, lawyers dominated among House members between the 79th and 92nd Congresses. During that period, approximately 40% of Representatives reported having been part of the legal profession. Beginning in the 102nd Congress, Representatives listing professional law backgrounds as a primary profession declined sharply, although the occupation continued to be the most common profession cited among Representatives. Even after the 102nd Congress, at least 20% of Representatives identified law as their first occupation. As **Figure 4** shows, as the proportion of House Members with legal experience declined, those reporting occupations in banking or business rose.

¹⁵ Detailed occupational information that includes the elective careers of Members of the 113th Congress is available in CRS Report R42964, *Membership of the 113th Congress: A Profile*, by Jennifer E. Manning.

Members whose occupations were in banking or business slightly surpassed or were equal to those with legal experience—each group included between roughly 20% and 25% of Representatives—after the 107th Congresses.

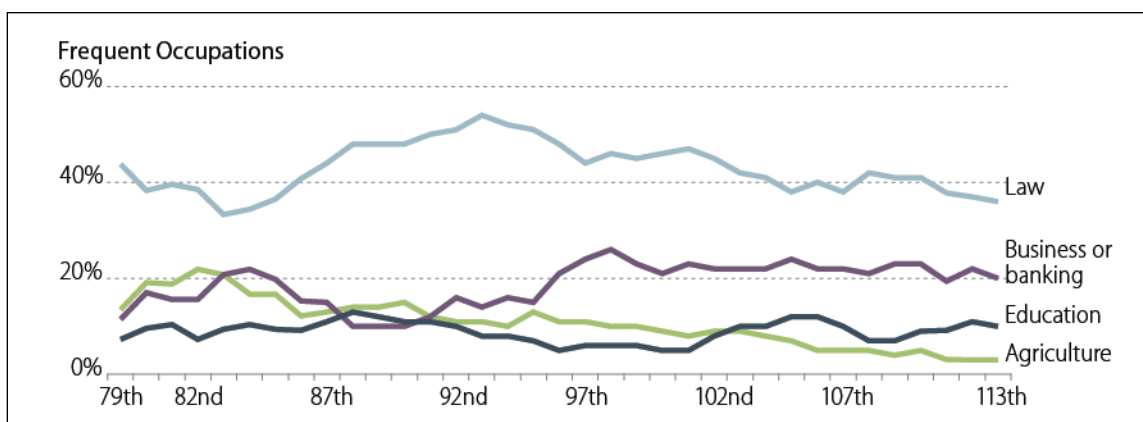
Finally, although careers as congressional aides (which could include a variety of job functions), in agriculture, and education were common overall, they were far less common than business or banking and law. **Table 6** provides data on five reported occupations of Representatives in the 79th – 113th Congresses.

Senators

Senators in selected Congresses held various professional backgrounds. Senators' occupations, however, have generally been confined to a narrower set of career backgrounds than House Members. **Table 7** provides data on five reported occupations of Senators in the 79th – 113th Congresses.

Senators' primary occupations generally included agriculture; business or banking; education; or law. These four professional categories are shared with House members, as noted above. There is less certainty about the primary occupation reported fifth-most-frequently.¹⁶

Figure 5. Frequently Reported Occupations of Senators, 79th – 113th Congresses



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Senators most frequently cited law and business or banking as their primary professions. Law, in particular, has dominated Senators' occupational experience. As shown, lawyers have occupied between one-third and half of Senate seats in the 79th – 113th Congresses. During the 93rd Congress, Members who had practiced law peaked, with slightly more than half of Senators

¹⁶ Senators' experience differs from their House counterparts when examining the professions of congressional aide, public service/politics, and actor/entertainer. Particularly when examining these three categories, the ambiguity in the data becomes clearer. As **Table 7** shows, Senators since 1945 frequently cited the actor/entertainer category fifth-most-frequently as their primary occupation. Although acting and entertaining is a "frequent" prior occupation among Senators, a closer analysis shows that any instance in which more than a few Senators cited a single profession can account for one occupation pulling ahead of another. In this instance, the acting/entertainer category's comparative dominance appears to be due to several Senators—up to 8—between the 89th and 100th Congresses citing acting/entertaining as their primary occupation. Since the 105th Congress, however, two or fewer Senators listed the profession as their primary previous occupation. Finally, it is potentially noteworthy that if the congressional aide and public service/politics categories (which are somewhat ambiguous) were combined, they would, on average, outpace the acting/entertaining category.

(54%) identifying their previous occupations in law. Legal backgrounds were less commonly reported in most subsequent Congresses.

Business and banking appeared as the second-most-common occupation. In particular, between approximately 10% and 26% of Senators since 1945 reported having practiced business or banking. Across all Congresses, backgrounds in education have also been common, but far less so than the other most commonly cited jobs. As with the House, Senators' prior professional experience in agriculture has declined steadily over time.

Race and Ethnicity

While recent Congresses have shown some changes, since 1945, the race and ethnicity of Representatives and Senators has been less diverse than that of the general public. **Figure 6** compares a distribution of Representatives and Senators by race at the beginning of the 113th Congress to the U.S. population in the 2010 census.

Representatives

Table 8 provides data on the race and ethnicity of Representatives since 1945. The House of Representatives was more than 95% white until the 93rd Congress and more than 90% white until the 103rd Congress. This group comprises 82.2% of the 113th Congress, a record low. The second largest group is African Americans, who comprised just under 0.5% of the House at the beginning of the 79th Congress, increasing to a high of 9.7% at the outset of the 112th Congress, and then decreasing slightly to 9.0% at the outset of the 113th Congress. This group is followed by the Representatives who have identified as Hispanic, who have grown from 0.2% of the Representatives at the beginning of the 79th Congress to a record high of 6.7% in the 113th Congresses. While the 79th Congress did not have any Asian American Representatives, this group represents 1.8% of the House in the 113th Congress, also a record high. American Indian¹⁷ membership in the House has fluctuated between 0.0% and 0.2%, which is the current representation in the 113th Congress.

¹⁷ American Indian is a term typically used by the Census Bureau and other governmental entities. The CQ Press data identify the same population as Native Americans.

Senators

Membership of the Senate at the beginning of the 113th Congress was 95% white, 3% Hispanic, 1% Asian American, and 1% African American. No more than 1% of Senators at the beginning of any Congress identified as African American or Native American. Since 1945, 23 Congresses began with no African American Senators, while there were no Native American Senators at the beginning of 29 Congresses over the same period. Senators identifying as Asian American have ranged between 0% of Senators in the 79th – 86th and 88th Congresses, to a high of 3% of Senators in the 95th-97th Congresses. Senators identifying as Hispanic have ranged from 0% (95th-108th Congresses) to a high of 3% of Senators at the outset of the 110th, 111th, and 113th Congresses. **Table 9** provides data on the race and ethnicity of Senators since 1945.

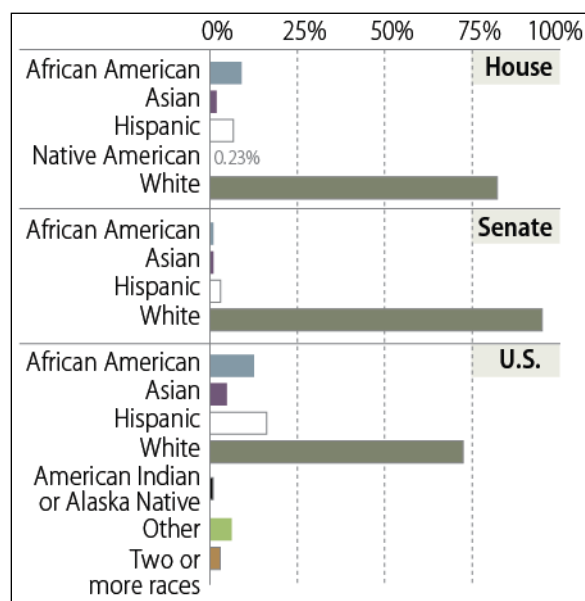
According to the 2010 Census, the U.S. population is 0.9% “American Indian or Alaska Native”; 4.8% “Asian”; 12.6% “Black or African American”; 16.3% “Hispanic”; 72.4% “White”; 6.2% “Some other race”; and 2.9% “Two or more races.”¹⁸ In the 2010 Census data, respondents who identified Hispanic origin also identified a racial category. These data are reported together in **Figure 6**. CQ Press identifies Hispanic Members in lieu of specific racial identification. As a consequence of these different data collection methods, direct comparisons of race and ethnicity between Representatives and Senators, and the U.S. population should be made with care.

Education

Since the 79th Congress, attendance and graduation rates among Representatives and Senators have increased at the high school, college, and graduate levels. Although these rates have also increased among the population at large, the average Member of Congress has a higher educational attainment level than the average American. In the 113th Congress, the majority of Representatives and Senators have completed high school, college, and some form of graduate school.¹⁹ Today a majority of Americans aged 25 years or older have completed high school, but less than one-third have completed four years of college or attended graduate school.

Figure 6. Race and Ethnicity of Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population

House and Senate, 113th Congress, U.S. Population, 2010

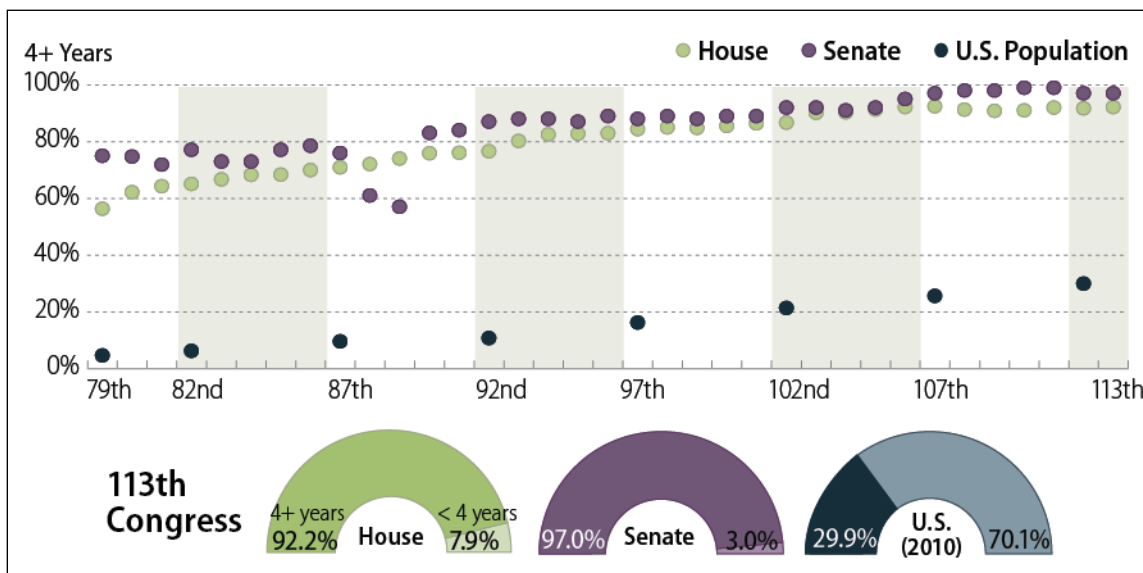


Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; U.S. Census Bureau; and CRS calculations.

¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, *Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010, 2010 Census Briefs*, Table 1: Population by Hispanic Origin and by Race for the United States: 2000 and 2010, issued March 2011, at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>. Percentages are provided by the Census Bureau to one decimal place, and do not equal 100% because census respondents identifying Hispanic origin may identify in any racial category.

¹⁹ Data from CQ Press on Member education included Representatives with “Education Unknown” for all these Congresses. Due to this, the proportion of school attendance and completion rates may actually be higher than what is reported.

Figure 7. Four or More Years of College Completed by Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population, 79th – 113th Congresses and U.S. Population, Selected Years



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; U.S. Census Bureau; and CRS calculations. U.S. data are based on Americans aged 25 years or older.

Historically, most Members of Congress have held at least a high school diploma, and although most Americans today have completed high school, this was not always the case. During the 79th Congress, the average Member of Congress was more likely to have graduated from high school than the average American. According to the Census Bureau, only 24.1% of American adults age 25 or older had completed four years of high school or more education during the years of the 79th Congress. By contrast, high school completion rates were 89.2% for House Members and 88.5% for Senators serving in the 79th Congress.²⁰ The percentage of those with at least a high school diploma in the United States has since grown, reaching 85.9% in 2011.²¹ High school graduation rates among Members of Congress, however, remain at a higher level. In the 113th Congress, at least 99.77% of Representatives had completed high school, and all Senators had completed high school.²²

Since 1945, a majority of Representatives and Senators have also held a college degree. The percentage of college graduation rates has increased more markedly since the 79th Congress than high school graduation rates among Members. Members of Congress also have a higher rate of college attendance and postgraduate education compared to the American population aged 25

²⁰ CQ Press reports attendance and graduate rates instead of years of school. Based on these data, this figure includes Members who graduated high school and did not pursue further education, Members who attended some college, and Members who obtained a college degree. This includes Members who received associate's degrees and Members who received bachelor's degrees: this may inflate the proportion of high school graduates slightly, since some Members will be counted twice, if achieving an associate's degree on the way to achieving a bachelor's degree. Some Members have earned undergraduate or graduate degrees while serving in Congress. In some instances, the CQ Press data were determined not to have been updated to reflect those changes. As a consequence, some levels of educational attainment may be underreported in the CQ Press data.

²¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States: 2011," at http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_1YR_DP02&prodType=table.

²² In the 113th Congress, CQ Press lists one Representative with "Education Unknown."

years or older. **Figure 7** compares the percentages of Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. population with four or more years of college education.²³ The percentage for each group has generally increased since 1945, though a much higher proportion of Senators and Representatives have attended four or more years of college than the U.S. population at large today. **Table 10** provides high school and undergraduate college completion data for Representatives in Congresses since 1945. **Table 11** provides the same data over the same period for Senators.

During the 79th Congress, 4.6% of American adults aged 25 years or older completed four or more years of college.²⁴ In the same time period, 56.3% of Representatives held a bachelor's degree, and 75.0% of Senators held a bachelor's degree. The national average for four or more years of college completed grew to 28.5% in 2011.²⁵ By the 113th Congress, however, 92.2% of Representatives, and 97.0% of Senators held a bachelor's degree. In the 113th Congress, 23 Representatives and one Senator held associate's degrees. For six Representatives, this was the highest degree obtained, but the other Members with associate's degrees also received bachelor's degrees.

The greatest change in Member education since the 79th Congress has been the increased number of graduate degrees. During the 113th Congress, 74.4% of Representatives and 74.0% of Senators held graduate degrees.²⁶ By contrast, only 33.1% of Representatives and 15.6% of Senators held graduate degrees in the 79th Congress. Both then and now, professional degrees are the most common type of advanced degree held among Representatives and Senators. In the 113th Congress, 41.6% of Representatives and 56.0% of Senators held professional degrees. 28.9% of Representatives and 18.0% of Senators held master's degrees. Doctoral degrees are fairly rare among Members, with 3.9% of Representatives in the 113th Congress holding such a degree and no Senators.

Religion

Representatives and Senators have in recent Congresses been more likely to identify affiliation with a religious faith than the public at large. **Figure 8** provides a comparison of self-identified religious affiliation among the Representatives and Senators in the 113th Congress, and the U.S. adult population in 2008, the latest date for which inclusive data are available.²⁷ Data identifying

²³ CQ Press provides the reported academic degrees earned by a Representative or Senator. Columns for Representatives and Senators represent the percent of Members with bachelor's degrees, which typically take four years to earn. In some cases, however, a Representative or Senator could have earned a bachelor's degree in less than four years. American population information came from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, which measures educational attainment as a percent of individuals over 25 who completed four or more years of college. These measures capture the same idea in many cases, but it is important to note that they are different measures, and may not be completely comparable.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1944-1945* (Washington: GPO, 1945), pp. 228-229.

²⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Selected Social Characteristics in the United States: 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," at http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_1YR_DP02&prodType=table.

²⁶ This includes master's degrees, doctoral degrees, and professional degrees. Generally, in contemporary times, graduate professional degrees are awarded at the completion of a course of study that prepares a student for a specific profession or career track. In the CQ Press data, these include the following: medical degrees (MD, DO), dental degrees (DMD, DDS), law degrees (LLB and JD), and Master's degrees in business administration (MBA) and public administration (MPA).

²⁷ Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape->

the reported religious affiliations of Representatives, Senators and the U.S. population during the same periods are provided in **Table 13**.

In both chambers, the percentages of Members identifying a religious affiliation grew from the 79th Congress through the 86th Congress, remained constant at 97% or higher in the 87th – 106th Congresses, and declined slightly thereafter. In the 113th Congress, 93.6% of Representatives and 91% of Senators identified a religious affiliation. There also have been increases in the number of Members providing information. For example, in the 79th Congress, CQ Press provided information for 32 Senators and 172 Representatives.²⁸ In the 113th Congress, information regarding religious affiliation was specified for 91 Senators and 407 Representatives. **Table 12** in the data section provides affiliation data for Representatives and Senators in the 79th-113th Congresses.

Religious affiliation data show that Representatives and Senators identify a religious affiliation in higher proportions than that of the general public. Of those who are affiliated, Representatives and Senators identify themselves as Christian or Jewish²⁹ in greater proportions than those affiliated with those faiths in the U.S. population. Among Christian denominations, Representatives and Senators are affiliated with Catholic, Mormon, and Orthodox churches in greater proportion than the U.S. population. In the 113th Congress, Representatives are affiliated with Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu faiths in approximate proportion to the U.S. population. In the Senate, the one adherent of Buddhism represents a greater proportion in that chamber than is present in the U.S. population, although this is magnified by the small number of Senators in comparison to more than the 300 million people who live in the United States. There are no Muslim or Hindu adherents in the Senate.

Representatives

In the 79th – 113th Congresses, most Representatives who specified a religious affiliation have identified Christianity or a Christian denomination.³⁰ The lowest level of Christian identification was 90.3% in the 102nd Congress; the highest, 97.7%, occurred in the 79th Congress. Of those Representatives who specified a Christian faith, a majority have identified a Protestant denomination³¹ since the 79th Congress. The Protestant majority peaked in the 82nd Congress, and has steadily declined, reaching its lowest level in the 113th Congress at 53.8%. Representatives

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²⁸ Comparing the extent of religious affiliation across time may be problematic for a number of reasons. First, it cannot be determined from the CQ Press data whether the differences in levels of affiliation over time may be ascribed to differences in the way CQ Press collected its data over time or to the extent of affiliation among individual Members, or both. Relatively low numbers in the early years covered in this report may also be attributable to a potential reluctance among Members of Congress to discuss private matters, including religious affiliation. During later years, the higher numbers of Members who claim a religious affiliation in greater proportion than the U.S. public may be attributable to the perceived political benefits of identifying an affiliation, or the perception of political costs of not identifying an affiliation. See, for example, Jennifer Michael Hecht, “The Last Taboo?,” *Politico*, December 9, 2013, at <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2013/12/the-last-taboo-atheists-politicians-100901.html>.

²⁹ The CQ Press data did not identify Jewish Representatives and Senators among the various traditions or movements of that faith.

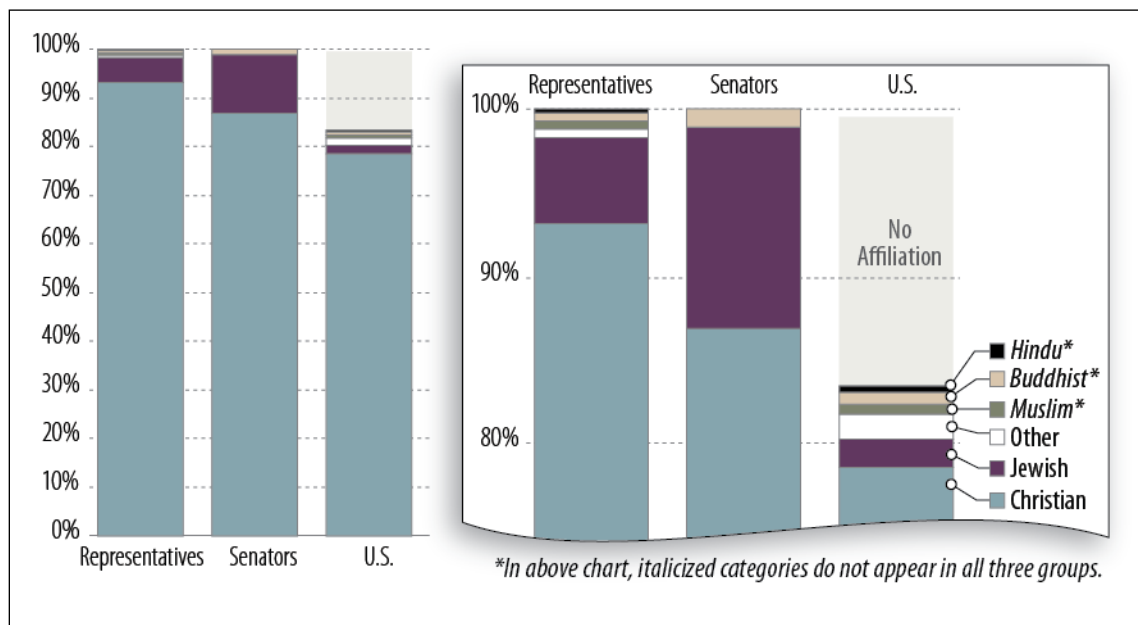
³⁰ Christian responses identified in the CQ Press data include the following: cases in which religion was identified as “Christian” without further specification; “mainline” and “evangelical” Protestant denominations, including historically Black churches, Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox, and other Christian.

³¹ Protestant includes the following responses: Protestant responses without further specification, and any responses that identified a “mainline” or “evangelical” Protestant denomination, or historically Black churches. CQ Press data do not distinguish between Protestant churches in mainline or evangelical traditions.

who identified an affiliation with Judaism ranged from a low of 0.6% in the 79th Congress, and peaked at 7.7% in the 103rd Congress. In the 112th Congress the level is 5.2%.

Table 15 provides affiliation data for Representatives in the 79th-113th Congresses. **Table 16** provides data on Representatives who identified a Christian denomination.

Figure 8. Religious Affiliation of Representatives, Senators, and U.S. Population
Members, 113th Congress, Public, 2008



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; for Members of Congress; Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic* for the U.S. population; and CRS calculations.

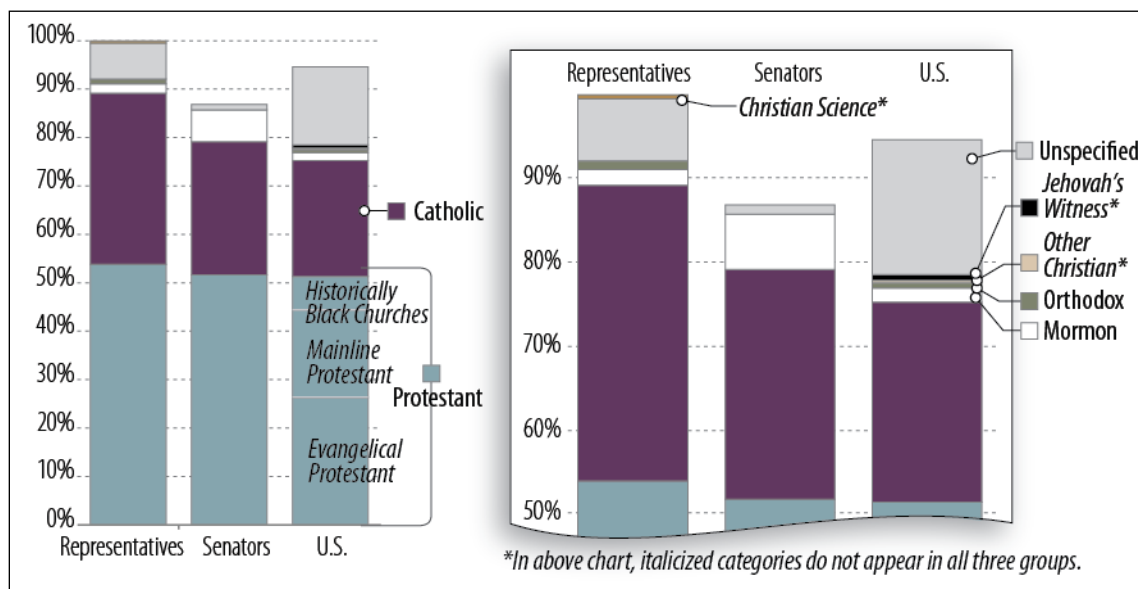
Senators

Among Senators who identified a religious affiliation, Christianity or a Christian denomination was identified by at least 85% of Senators in each of the selected Congresses. Senators who identified Judaism ranged from zero in the 79th - 81st Congresses, increasing to a high of 14% in the 110th Congress before falling slightly in the 111th - 113th Congresses. In the 113th Congress, Senators who identified a Jewish affiliation comprised 12.09% of those who identified a religion.

Among Senators who identified themselves as Christians, a majority offered a Protestant denomination in each of the selected Congresses. The highest percentage of Protestant Senators occurred in the 82nd Congress at 88.3%. This level fell steadily through the 113th Congress, to 51.65%. **Table 17** provides affiliation data for Senators in the 79th - 113th Congresses. **Table 18** provides data on Senators who identified a Christian denomination.

Figure 9. Christian Denominations Identified by Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population

Members, 113th Congress, U.S. Public, 2008



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; for Members of Congress; Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic* for the U.S. population; and CRS calculations. Member percentages are based on 4072 Representatives and 91 Senators who specified affiliation with a Christian denomination or tradition.

Military Service

Member military service grew gradually following World War II before peaking at 75.2% in the House at the beginning of the 90th Congress and 80% in the Senate in the 94th Congress. Thereafter, the total number of veterans declined to 19.6% in the House and 18.1% in the Senate in the 113th Congress. The number of Representatives in the House who served in the military in the 113th Congress is up slightly from previous Congresses (18.9% in the 111th Congress and 17.9% in the 112th Congress), while the number of Senators who served in the military declined from 26.3% in the 112th Congress.³²

Figure 10 illustrates the Representatives, Senators, and members of the U.S. population who have served in the military.

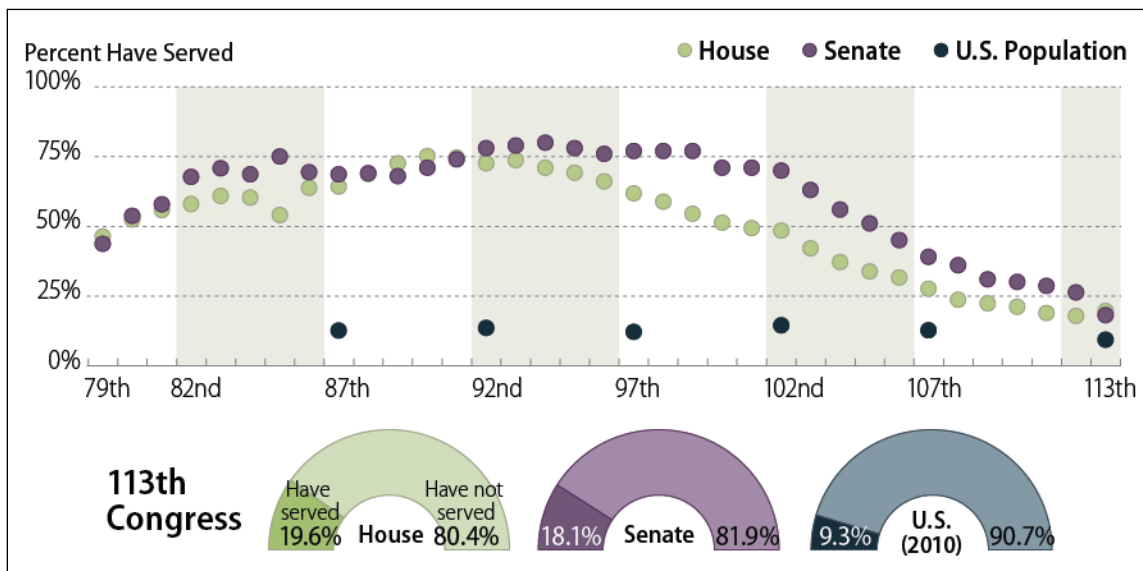
Compared with the general population, Representatives and Senators have served in the military in greater proportions. For example, in the 87th Congress, 64.3% of Representatives and 68.7% of Senators had served in the military, while only 12.6% of the adult U.S. population were veterans.³³ At the same time, the proportion of Members and the general public who have served may fluctuate in tandem. The percentage of veteran Members increased from the 79th to the 94th

³² Data identifying the service of Representatives and Senators by military branch are available to congressional clients upon request.

³³ Data on veterans from the 1940 and 1950 Censuses are not publicly available. In the 1960 Census, data on veteran status were collected for all male veterans of the armed services who were age 14 or older. In the 1970-1990 Censuses, veterans 16 and older were counted, and female veterans were included in the 1980 and subsequent tallies. In the 2000 Census, and 2010 American Community Survey the age of tabulated veterans was 18.

Congresses and then declined through the 113th Congress, in a manner that may be similar to the trend seen within the general population. Member military service grew gradually since World War II before peaking at 75.2% in the House in the 90th Congress, and 78% in the Senate in the 92nd Congress. Thereafter, the total number of veterans declined to 18% in the House and 27.8% in the Senate in the 111th Congress. For the 113th Congress, the number of Members who have served in the military is up slightly in both chambers, with 21.3% of Representatives and 28.9% of Senators having previously served in the armed forces.³⁴

Figure 10. Military Service by Representatives, Senators, 79th – 113th Congresses, and U.S. Population, Selected Years



Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection for Members of Congress; decennial censuses, 1960-2000 and 2010 American Community Survey for the U.S. population; and CRS calculations.

Table 19 provides data on the Representatives, Senators and members of the U.S. population who have served in the military.

Compared with the general population, Representatives and Senators have served in the military in greater proportions. For example, in the 79th Congress, 43.5% of Representatives and 41.3% of Senators had served in the military, while only 3.3% of the adult U.S. population were veterans.³⁵ Based on limited, comparable data, it appears that it may be the case that the proportion of Members and the general public who have served might fluctuate in tandem. The percentage of veteran Members increased from the 79th to the 92nd Congresses and then declined through the 113th Congress, in a manner similar to service levels seen in the general population.

Concluding Observations

A challenge to understanding an enduring institution like Congress is the broad scope of its activities and the lack of consistent, reliable information about its various components over time. This report focuses on selected characteristics of Members that appear to be consistent over a

³⁴ Data identifying the service of Representatives and Senators by military branch are available to congressional clients upon request.

³⁵ Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, et al., *Historical Statistics of the United States*, vol. 5 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 5-408.

period of seven decades. Members in 2013 are older, more likely to identify a religious affiliation, and include more women and members of racial and ethnic groups than Members in 1945. The data suggest that since the 79th Congress, Members have had high levels of education, and worked in professional positions prior to coming to Congress. The number of Members who previously served in the military has risen and fallen, possibly in tandem with the levels of service in the broader population.

These findings arguably provide a more robust understanding of the composition of Representatives and Senators over time than other studies that focus on the membership of individual Congresses. A consistent data source enables longitudinal analysis, but comparisons to other profiles of Congress, which may rely on different data sources, characteristics of Members, or time periods, should be made with caution.

Member Characteristics Data Tables

Data provided in this report include the number of Representatives and Senators who took seats in the House or Senate, respectively, on the first day of a new Congress. Proportions reported may be affected by vacancies. In the 79th - 85th Congresses, the Senate had 96 seats representing the 48 states admitted to the Union. During the 86th Congress the number of seats increased to its current level of 100 with the admission of Alaska and Hawaii as states. Membership of the House has been fixed at 435 seats since 1911, except for a temporary enlargement to 437 in the 86th – 87th Congresses to accommodate Representatives from Alaska and Hawaii. The number of House seats reverted to 435 following the 1960 Census and reapportionment. Since CQ Press provides no information on Delegates and the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico, they are excluded from House calculations. **Table 1** provides the number of Members who took seats on the first day of the 79th-113th Congress.

Age

Table 2. Age of Representatives, Oldest and Youngest Representatives at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Mean (Average)	Median	Oldest	Age	Youngest	Age
79 th	52.77	51.84	Joseph J. Mansfield	83.90	Marion Tinsley Bennett	30.58
80 th	52.04	51.76	Joseph J. Mansfield	85.89	George William Sarbacher	27.26
81 st	51.93	50.91	Robert Lee Doughton	85.16	Hugo Sheridan, Jr.	27.22
82 nd	52.61	52.17	Robert Lee Doughton	87.16	Patrick Jerome Hillings	27.87
83 rd	52.26	52.28	Merlin Hull	82.04	William Creed Wampler	26.73
84 th	52.24	52.37	Brent Spence	80.03	Kenneth James Gray	30.14
85 th	53.52	53.04	Brent Spence	82.03	John David Dingell, Jr.	30.49
86 th	52.26	51.42	Brent Spence	84.03	Daniel David Rostenkowski	31.01
87 th	52.80	52.65	Brent Spence	86.03	Ralph R. Harding	31.32
88 th	52.33	51.37	Thomas Joseph O'Brien	84.69	Edgar Franklin Foreman	29.05
89 th	51.05	50.19	Barratt O'Hara	82.69	Jed Joseph Johnson, Jr.	25.05
90 th	51.37	50.74	Barratt O'Hara	84.69	William Joseph Green, III	28.55

Congress	Mean (Average)	Median	Oldest	Age	Youngest	Age
91 st	52.05	51.80	William Levi Dawson	82.69	William Joseph Green, III	30.55
92 nd	52.55	51.74	Emanuel Celler	82.66	Marvin Dawson Mathis	30.09
93 rd	51.79	51.12	Ray John Madden	80.88	John B. Breaux	28.84
94 th	50.38	49.82	Ray John Madden	82.88	Thomas J. Downey	25.96
95 th	49.64	49.69	Otis Grey Pike	77.02	James Henry Quillen	27.63
96 th	49.33	49.36	Claude Denson Pepper	78.33	James M. Shannon	26.78
97 th	48.90	48.95	Claude Denson Pepper	80.33	John LeBoutillier	27.61
98 th	49.24	48.44	Claude Denson Pepper	82.33	James Hayes Shofner Cooper	28.54
99 th	50.18	49.11	Claude Denson Pepper	84.33	John G. Rowland	27.61
100 th	51.36	49.83	Claude Denson Pepper	86.33	John G. Rowland	29.61
101 st	52.23	50.62	Claude Denson Pepper	88.33	John G. Rowland	31.61
102 nd	52.95	51.73	Sidney Richard Yates	81.36	Jim Nussle	30.52
103 rd	51.89	50.96	Sidney Richard Yates	83.36	Cleo Fields	30.12
104 th	51.46	50.83	Sidney Richard Yates	85.36	Patrick J. Kennedy	27.48
105 th	52.13	51.54	Sidney Richard Yates	87.36	Harold E. Ford, Jr.	26.66
106 th	53.11	52.45	George Edward Brown, Jr.	78.83	Harold E. Ford, Jr.	28.66
107 th	53.87	53.89	Benjamin Gilman	78.08	Adam Putnam	26.43
108 th	54.48	54.95	Ralph Moody Hall	79.67	Adam Putnam	28.43
109 th	55.55	56.22	Ralph Moody Hall	81.67	Patrick McHenry	29.20
110 th	56.38	56.59	Ralph Moody Hall	83.67	Patrick McHenry	31.20
111 th	56.94	57.26	Ralph Moody Hall	85.67	Aaron Schock	27.60
112 th	56.65	57.17	Ralph Moody Hall	87.67	Aaron Schock	29.60
113 th	56.84	57.46	Ralph Moody Hall	89.67	Patrick E. Murphy	29.77

Source: Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, at <http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>; CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Table 3. Age of Senators, Oldest and Youngest Senators at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Average	Median	Oldest	Age	Youngest	Age
79 th	58.96	59.29	Carter Glass	87	Joseph Hurst Ball	39.17
80 th	56.54	56.08	Arthur Capper	81.47	Joseph Raymond McCarthy	38.14
81 st	56.8	56.35	Theodore Francis Green	81.26	Russell Billiu Long	30.17
82 nd	57.22	55.91	Theodore Francis Green	83.26	Russell Billiu Long	32.17
83 rd	57.42	56.77	Theodore Francis Green	85.26	Russell Billiu Long	34.17
84 th	57.67	58.1	Theodore Francis Green	87.26	Russell Billiu Long	36.17
85 th	58.16	59.06	Theodore Francis Green	89.26	Frank Forrester Church	32.44
86 th	57.63	57.43	Theodore Francis Green	91.26	Frank Forrester Church	34.44

Congress	Average	Median	Oldest	Age	Youngest	Age
87 th	58.16	58.83	Carl Trumbull Hayden	83.26	Frank Forrester Church	36.44
88 th	57.09	57.97	Carl Trumbull Hayden	85.26	Edward Moore (Ted) Kennedy	30.88
89 th	58.2	59.74	Carl Trumbull Hayden	87.26	Edward Moore (Ted) Kennedy	32.88
90 th	58.14	59.34	Carl Trumbull Hayden	89.26	Edward Moore (Ted) Kennedy	34.88
91 st	57.04	56.41	Stephen Marvin Young	79.67	Robert William Packwood	36.31
92 nd	56.99	56.29	Allen Joseph Ellender	80.27	John Tunney	36.52
93 rd	56.03	56.19	George David Aiken	80.37	Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.	30.13
94 th	55.95	55.16	John Little McClellan	78.87	Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.	32.13
95 th	55.09	54.44	John Little McClellan	80.87	Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.	34.13
96 th	53.13	52.96	Milton Ruben Young	81.11	William Warren Bradley	35.47
97 th	52.81	51.69	John Cornelius Stennis	79.43	Donald Lee Nickles	32.08
98 th	53.92	52.82	John Cornelius Stennis	81.43	Donald Lee Nickles	34.08
99 th	54.66	53.65	John Cornelius Stennis	83.43	Donald Lee Nickles	36.08
100 th	55.08	53.89	John Cornelius Stennis	85.43	Donald Lee Nickles	38.08
101 st	55.81	54.58	James Strom Thurmond	86.08	Donald Lee Nickles	40.08
102 nd	57.36	56.36	James Strom Thurmond	88.08	Donald Lee Nickles	42.08
103 rd	58.22	57.93	James Strom Thurmond	90.08	Russell D. Feingold	39.85
104 th	58.61	57.51	James Strom Thurmond	92.08	Richard John (Rick) Santorum	36.66
105 th	57.97	56.17	James Strom Thurmond	94.08	Richard John (Rick) Santorum	38.66
106 th	58.75	57.15	James Strom Thurmond	96.08	Peter G. Fitzgerald	38.21
107 th	59.3	58.43	James Strom Thurmond	98.08	Peter G. Fitzgerald	40.21
108 th	59.94	59.36	Robert Carlyle Byrd	85.12	John Edward Sununu	38.31
109 th	60.85	60.98	Robert Carlyle Byrd	87.12	John Edward Sununu	40.31
110 th	62.24	62.76	Robert Carlyle Byrd	89.12	John Edward Sununu	42.31
111 th	63.23	62.11	Robert Carlyle Byrd	91.12	Mark Pryor	45.98
112 th	62.23	61.41	Frank Raleigh Lautenberg	86.95	Mike Lee	39.58
113 th	61.62	61.74	Frank Raleigh Lautenberg	88.95	Christopher S. Murphy	39.42

Source: Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, at <http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>; CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Sex

Table 4. Female and Male Representatives, at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Female	Male	Congress	Female	Male
79 th	2.07%	97.93%	97 th	4.15%	95.85%
80 th	1.62%	98.38%	98 th	4.84%	95.16%
81 st	1.84%	98.16%	99 th	5.06%	94.94%
82 nd	1.84%	98.16%	100 th	5.29%	94.71%

Congress	Female	Male	Congress	Female	Male
83 rd	2.53%	97.47%	101 st	5.77%	94.23%
84 th	3.45%	96.55%	102 nd	6.44%	93.56%
85 th	3.46%	96.54%	103 rd	10.80%	89.20%
86 th	3.67%	96.33%	104 th	10.80%	89.20%
87 th	3.43%	96.57%	105 th	11.72%	88.28%
88 th	2.53%	97.47%	106 th	12.90%	87.10%
89 th	2.30%	97.70%	107 th	13.59%	86.41%
90 th	2.53%	97.47%	108 th	13.56%	86.44%
91 st	2.30%	97.70%	109 th	14.98%	85.02%
92 nd	2.76%	97.24%	110 th	16.32%	83.68%
93 rd	3.23%	96.77%	111 th	17.28%	82.72%
94 th	4.14%	95.86%	112 th	16.55%	83.45%
95 th	4.14%	95.86%	113 th	18.24%	81.76%
96 th	3.69%	96.31%			

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Additional information on the number of women in Congress is available in the historical data section of <http://womenincongress.house.gov/>; and U.S. House, Committee on House Administration and Office of the Clerk, *Women in Congress, 1917-2006* (Washington, GPO: 2006); and CRS Report RL30261, *Women in the United States Congress, 1917-2013: Biographical and Committee Assignment Information, and Listings by State and Congress*, by Jennifer E. Manning and Ida A. Brudnick.

Table 5. Female and Male Senators, at the Start of 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Female	Male	Congress	Female	Male
79 th	0.00%	100.00%	97 th	2.00%	98.00%
80 th	0.00%	100.00%	98 th	2.00%	98.00%
81 st	1.04%	98.96%	99 th	2.00%	98.00%
82 nd	1.04%	98.96%	100 th	2.00%	98.00%
83 rd	1.04%	98.96%	101 st	2.00%	98.00%
84 th	1.04%	98.96%	102 nd	2.02%	97.98%
85 th	1.04%	98.96%	103 rd	6.00%	94.00%
86 th	1.02%	98.98%	104 th	8.00%	92.00%
87 th	2.00%	98.00%	105 th	9.00%	91.00%
88 th	2.00%	98.00%	106 th	9.00%	91.00%
89 th	2.00%	98.00%	107 th	13.00%	87.00%
90 th	1.00%	99.00%	108 th	14.00%	86.00%
91 st	1.00%	99.00%	109 th	14.00%	86.00%
92 nd	1.00%	99.00%	110 th	16.00%	84.00%
93 rd	0.00%	100.00%	111 th	16.33%	83.67%
94 th	0.00%	100.00%	112 th	17.00%	83.00%

Congress	Female	Male	Congress	Female	Male
95 th	0.00%	100.00%	113 th	20.00%	80.00%
96 th	1.00%	99.00%			

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Additional information on the number of women in Congress is available in the historical data section of *Women in Congress*, at <http://womenincongress.house.gov/>; and U.S. House, Committee on House Administration and Office of the Clerk, *Women in Congress, 1917-2006* (Washington, GPO: 2006); and CRS Report RL30261, *Women in the United States Congress, 1917-2013: Biographical and Committee Assignment Information, and Listings by State and Congress*, by Jennifer E. Manning and Ida A. Brudnick.

Previous Occupation

Table 6. Frequently Reported Occupations of Representatives, at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Agriculture	Business or Banking	Congressional Aide	Education	Law
79 th	10.80%	19.30%	1.60%	9.20%	41.60%
80 th	12.20%	20.30%	2.80%	9.90%	39.50%
81 st	12.20%	20.00%	3.00%	9.40%	38.50%
82 nd	12.00%	21.40%	3.40%	9.40%	38.20%
83 rd	12.00%	22.50%	4.40%	8.50%	38.20%
84 th	12.40%	20.70%	4.10%	8.50%	38.20%
85 th	11.30%	22.20%	3.70%	7.90%	40.40%
86 th	12.40%	18.60%	4.40%	6.40%	41.10%
87 th	11.20%	19.20%	3.90%	6.90%	42.60%
88 th	11.50%	20.30%	4.40%	5.80%	43.10%
89 th	9.90%	18.40%	5.10%	8.50%	41.40%
90 th	9.20%	20.00%	5.10%	7.10%	42.80%
91 st	8.50%	20.70%	5.10%	7.80%	42.80%
92 nd	9.40%	20.50%	4.80%	9.00%	41.40%
93 rd	9.20%	21.20%	4.40%	10.10%	38.70%
94 th	7.40%	20.90%	4.60%	10.60%	38.90%
95 th	6.70%	20.50%	4.60%	9.70%	40.00%
96 th	6.70%	21.70%	6.00%	9.00%	37.60%
97 th	7.80%	24.00%	6.00%	9.90%	34.60%
98 th	7.10%	24.90%	5.50%	8.30%	37.60%
99 th	6.70%	27.10%	6.20%	9.00%	33.80%
100 th	5.70%	26.70%	6.90%	9.40%	32.40%
101 st	5.10%	25.90%	6.70%	10.40%	32.60%
102 nd	4.80%	27.60%	6.90%	11.70%	29.40%

Congress	Agriculture	Business or Banking	Congressional Aide	Education	Law
103 rd	4.60%	26.20%	7.10%	12.90%	29.20%
104 th	5.30%	29.70%	7.60%	13.60%	25.70%
105 th	6.00%	30.30%	6.70%	14.30%	26.20%
106 th	5.50%	28.60%	6.20%	13.80%	25.10%
107 th	5.10%	24.70%	5.50%	12.90%	22.10%
108 th	4.40%	22.10%	5.10%	11.50%	21.10%
109 th	3.70%	21.40%	5.80%	11.30%	21.20%
110 th	3.00%	20.20%	6.00%	11.00%	24.40%
111 th	2.50%	18.20%	4.80%	8.80%	22.10%
112 th	2.50%	22.30%	4.80%	8.70%	25.30%
113 th	2.80%	22.90%	5.70%	9.40%	24.80%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Percentage of Representatives reporting the occupation as “Job 1” in that Congress. Other category includes all other response recorded as “Job 1.” Percentages may understate the extent to which Representatives practiced an occupation, since some listed as many as five occupations. Further, CQ Press does not include Members’ prior elected service in state or local offices (which are common paths to congressional careers) in occupational data, which may lead to a significant understatement of the public service/politics category, and which could otherwise affect the most frequently reported pre-congressional occupations.

Table 7. Frequently Reported Occupations of Senators, at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Acting/ Entertainer	Agriculture	Business or Banking	Education	Law
79 th	2.10%	13.50%	11.50%	7.30%	43.80%
80 th	3.20%	19.10%	17.00%	9.60%	38.30%
81 st	4.20%	18.80%	15.60%	10.40%	39.60%
82 nd	3.10%	21.90%	15.60%	7.30%	38.50%
83 rd	3.10%	20.80%	20.80%	9.40%	33.30%
84 th	4.20%	16.70%	21.90%	10.40%	34.40%
85 th	5.20%	16.70%	19.80%	9.40%	36.50%
86 th	7.10%	12.20%	15.30%	9.20%	40.80%
87 th	5.00%	13.00%	15.00%	11.00%	44.00%
88 th	5.00%	14.00%	10.00%	13.00%	48.00%
89 th	7.00%	14.00%	10.00%	12.00%	48.00%
90 th	7.00%	15.00%	10.00%	11.00%	48.00%
91 st	8.00%	12.00%	12.00%	11.00%	50.00%
92 nd	6.00%	11.00%	16.00%	10.00%	51.00%
93 rd	6.00%	11.00%	14.00%	8.00%	54.00%
94 th	7.00%	10.00%	16.00%	8.00%	52.00%

Congress	Acting/ Entertainer	Agriculture	Business or Banking	Education	Law
95 th	6.00%	13.00%	15.00%	7.00%	51.00%
96 th	7.00%	11.00%	21.00%	5.00%	48.00%
97 th	5.00%	11.00%	24.00%	6.00%	44.00%
98 th	5.00%	10.00%	26.00%	6.00%	46.00%
99 th	7.00%	10.00%	23.00%	6.00%	45.00%
100 th	7.00%	9.00%	21.00%	5.00%	46.00%
101 st	6.00%	8.00%	23.00%	5.00%	47.00%
102 nd	6.00%	9.00%	22.00%	8.00%	45.00%
103 rd	4.00%	9.00%	22.00%	10.00%	42.00%
104 th	5.00%	8.00%	22.00%	10.00%	41.00%
105 th	2.00%	7.00%	24.00%	12.00%	38.00%
106 th	2.00%	5.00%	22.00%	12.00%	40.00%
107 th	2.00%	5.00%	22.00%	10.00%	38.00%
108 th	0.00%	5.00%	21.00%	7.00%	42.00%
109 th	0.00%	4.00%	23.00%	7.00%	41.00%
110 th	0.00%	5.00%	23.00%	9.00%	41.00%
111 th	0.00%	3.10%	19.40%	9.20%	37.80%
112 th	1.00%	3.00%	22.00%	11.00%	37.00%
113 th	1.00%	3.00%	20.00%	10.00%	36.00%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Percentage of Senators reporting the occupation as “Job 1” in that Congress. Other category includes all other response recorded as “Job 1.” Percentages may understate the extent to which Representatives practiced an occupation, since some listed as many as five occupations. Further, CQ Press does not include Members’ prior elected service in state or local offices (which are common paths to congressional careers) in occupational data, which may lead to a significant understatement of the public service/politics category, and which could otherwise affect the most frequently report pre-congressional occupations.

Race/Ethnicity

Table 8. Race and Ethnicity of Representatives at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	African American	Asian American	Hispanic	Native American	White
79 th	0.46%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.31%
80 th	0.46%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.31%
81 st	0.46%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.31%
82 nd	0.46%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.31%
83 rd	0.46%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.31%
84 th	0.69%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	99.08%

Congress	African American	Asian American	Hispanic	Native American	White
85 th	0.69%	0.23%	0.00%	0.00%	99.08%
86 th	0.92%	0.23%	0.23%	0.00%	98.62%
87 th	0.92%	0.46%	0.23%	0.23%	98.17%
88 th	1.15%	0.23%	0.69%	0.23%	97.70%
89 th	1.38%	0.46%	0.69%	0.23%	97.24%
90 th	1.38%	0.46%	0.69%	0.23%	97.24%
91 st	2.07%	0.46%	0.92%	0.23%	96.32%
92 nd	2.76%	0.46%	1.15%	0.00%	95.63%
93 rd	3.23%	0.46%	1.15%	0.00%	95.15%
94 th	3.68%	0.69%	1.15%	0.00%	94.48%
95 th	3.68%	0.46%	1.15%	0.00%	94.71%
96 th	3.46%	0.69%	1.38%	0.00%	94.47%
97 th	3.92%	0.69%	1.38%	0.00%	93.78%
98 th	4.61%	0.69%	2.30%	0.00%	92.40%
99 th	4.37%	0.69%	2.53%	0.00%	92.41%
100 th	5.06%	0.92%	2.53%	0.23%	91.26%
101 st	5.31%	0.92%	2.31%	0.23%	91.22%
102 nd	5.75%	0.69%	2.30%	0.23%	91.03%
103 rd	8.74%	0.92%	3.91%	0.00%	86.44%
104 th	8.74%	0.92%	3.91%	0.00%	86.44%
105 th	8.51%	0.69%	4.37%	0.00%	86.44%
106 th	8.53%	0.69%	4.15%	0.00%	86.64%
107 th	8.29%	0.92%	4.38%	0.00%	86.41%
108 th	8.51%	0.69%	5.06%	0.23%	85.52%
109 th	9.22%	0.69%	5.30%	0.23%	84.56%
110 th	9.20%	1.15%	5.29%	0.23%	84.14%
111 th	8.99%	1.38%	5.53%	0.23%	83.87%
112 th	9.66%	1.61%	5.52%	0.23%	82.99%
113 th	9.01%	1.85%	6.70%	0.23%	82.22%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Additional information on the number of Members from various racial and ethnic groups is available from the following sources: U.S. House, *Black Americans in Congress, 1870-2007*, Office of the Clerk, Office of History and Preservation (Washington, GPO: 2008), at <http://baic.house.gov/>; *Hispanic Americans in Congress*, at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/>; CRS Report RL30378, *African American Members of the United States Congress: 1870-2012*, by Jennifer E. Manning and Colleen J. Shogan; and CRS Report 97-398, *Asian Pacific Americans in the United States Congress*, by Lorraine H. Tong.

Table 9. Race and Ethnicity of Senators at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	African American	Asian American	Hispanic	Native American	White
79 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
80 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.05%	0.00%	98.95%
81 st	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
82 nd	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
83 rd	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
84 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
85 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%	0.00%	98.96%
86 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.02%	0.00%	98.98%
87 th	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%	98.00%
88 th	0.00%	0.00%	1.00%	0.00%	99.00%
89 th	0.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	97.00%
90 th	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	96.00%
91 st	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	96.00%
92 nd	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	96.00%
93 rd	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	96.00%
94 th	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	96.00%
95 th	1.00%	3.00%	0.00%	0.00%	96.00%
96 th	0.00%	3.00%	0.00%	0.00%	97.00%
97 th	0.00%	3.00%	0.00%	0.00%	97.00%
98 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	98.00%
99 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	98.00%
100 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	98.00%
101 st	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	98.00%
102 nd	0.00%	2.02%	0.00%	0.00%	97.98%
103 rd	1.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	96.00%
104 th	1.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	96.00%
105 th	1.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	96.00%
106 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	97.00%
107 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	97.00%
108 th	0.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%	97.00%
109 th	1.00%	2.00%	2.00%	0.00%	95.00%
110 th	1.00%	2.00%	3.00%	0.00%	94.00%
111 th	0.00%	2.04%	3.06%	0.00%	94.90%
112 th	0.00%	2.00%	2.00%	0.00%	96.00%
113 th	1.00%	1.00%	3.00%	0.00%	95.00%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: Additional information on the number of Members from various racial and ethnic groups is available from the following sources: U.S. House, *Black Americans in Congress, 1870-2007*, Office of the Clerk, Office of History and Preservation (Washington, GPO: 2008), at <http://baic.house.gov/>; *Hispanic Americans in Congress*, at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/>; CRS Report RL30378, *African American Members of the United States Congress: 1870-2012*, by Jennifer E. Manning and Colleen J. Shogan; and CRS Report 97-398, *Asian Pacific Americans in the United States Congress*, by Lorraine H. Tong.

Education

Table 10. High School and Undergraduate Completion of Representatives at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	High School	College
79 th	89.20%	56.32%
80 th	92.15%	62.12%
81 st	91.94%	64.29%
82 nd	91.95%	65.06%
83 rd	92.64%	66.67%
84 th	92.41%	68.28%
85 th	92.61%	68.36%
86 th	93.58%	69.95%
87 th	94.51%	70.94%
88 th	94.46%	72.06%
89 th	96.32%	74.02%
90 th	96.78%	75.86%
91 st	97.01%	76.09%
92 nd	97.47%	76.55%
93 rd	97.93%	80.18%
94 th	98.39%	82.53%
95 th	98.85%	82.76%
96 th	98.85%	82.95%
97 th	99.77%	84.37%
98 th	99.77%	85.02%
99 th	99.77%	84.83%
100 th	99.77%	85.52%
101 st	99.77%	86.37%
102 nd	99.77%	86.67%
103 rd	99.54%	90.11%
104 th	99.77%	90.34%
105 th	99.77%	91.26%
106 th	99.77%	92.17%

Congress	High School	College
107 th	99.77%	92.41%
108 th	99.77%	91.26%
109 th	99.77%	90.80%
110 th	99.77%	91.03%
111 th	99.54%	91.95%
112 th	99.77%	91.72%
113 th	99.77%	92.15%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Notes: College completion based on Member reports of earning a bachelors' or graduate degree.

Table 11. High School and Undergraduate Completion of Senators at the Start of Selected the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	High School	College
79 th	88.49%	75.00%
80 th	87.37%	74.74%
81 st	90.63%	71.88%
82 nd	92.71%	77.08%
83 rd	92.71%	72.92%
84 th	91.67%	72.92%
85 th	92.71%	77.08%
86 th	92.86%	78.57%
87 th	92.00%	76.00%
88 th	95.00%	61.00%
89 th	95.00%	57.00%
90 th	96.00%	83.00%
91 st	96.00%	84.00%
92 nd	97.00%	87.00%
93 rd	97.00%	88.00%
94 th	97.00%	88.00%
95 th	97.00%	87.00%
96 th	99.00%	89.00%
97 th	99.00%	88.00%
98 th	100.00%	89.00%
99 th	100.00%	88.00%
100 th	100.00%	89.00%
101 st	100.00%	89.00%
102 nd	100.00%	92.00%

Congress	High School	College
103 rd	100.00%	92.00%
104 th	100.00%	91.00%
105 th	100.00%	92.00%
106 th	100.00%	95.00%
107 th	100.00%	97.00%
108 th	100.00%	98.00%
109 th	100.00%	98.00%
110 th	100.00%	99.00%
111 th	100.00%	98.98%
112 th	100.00%	97.00%
113 th	100.00%	97.00%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CRS calculations.

Notes: College completion based on Member reports of earning a bachelors' or graduate degree.

Religion

Table 12. Representatives and Senators Specifying a Religious Affiliation at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Representatives	Senators
79 th	39.54%	33.33%
80 th	51.03%	46.88%
81 st	58.16%	52.08%
82 nd	64.83%	65.63%
83 rd	74.48%	73.96%
84 th	80.46%	80.21%
85 th	85.29%	86.46%
86 th	97.01%	98.98%
87 th	96.55%	99.00%
88 th	98.85%	99.00%
89 th	98.85%	100.00%
90 th	99.08%	100.00%
91 st	98.85%	100.00%
92 nd	97.70%	100.00%
93 rd	97.70%	100.00%
94 th	98.16%	100.00%
95 th	98.16%	100.00%
96 th	99.08%	100.00%
97 th	99.08%	100.00%

Congress	Representatives	Senators
98 th	99.08%	100.00%
99 th	99.31%	100.00%
100 th	99.08%	100.00%
101 st	98.62%	100.00%
102 nd	99.08%	100.00%
103 rd	98.85%	99.00%
104 th	99.31%	99.00%
105 th	98.85%	99.00%
106 th	92.64%	98.00%
107 th	91.72%	96.00%
108 th	88.28%	93.00%
109 th	89.43%	92.00%
110 th	90.11%	93.00%
111 th	91.03%	90.72%
112 th	93.10%	91.00%
113 th	93.56%	91.00%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations.

Table 13. Religious Affiliation of Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population
Members, 113th Congress, U.S. Population, 2008

Affiliation	Representatives	Senators	U.S.
Christian	93.12%	86.81%	78.50%
Jewish	5.16%	12.09%	1.70%
Muslim	0.49%	0.00%	0.60%
Buddhist	0.49%	1.10%	.70%
Other ^a	0.49%	0.00%	1.50%
Hindu	0.25%	0.00%	0.40%
No Affiliation	— ^b	— ^b	16.10%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection for Members of Congress; Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>, for the U.S. population; and CRS calculations.

Notes: Data for Members of Congress at the beginning of the 113th Congress. Percentages are based on 407 Representatives and 92 Senators who responded to CQ Press regarding a religious affiliation. U.S. population data are based on a 2008 sample of 35,000 respondents.

- a. Other religious affiliations reported in CQ Press data include Quaker; Unitarian; Unitarian Universalist; Universalist; Society of Friends; and some specific identification of participation in certain Quaker Annual Meetings. Other affiliations in the U.S. population data include Unitarian and other liberal faiths, New Age, and Native American religions.

- b. CQ Press did not provide information on the number of unaffiliated Members. Instead it provided a category called “not specified.” In the 113th Congress, 5.98% of Representatives, and 9.00% of Senators did not specify their religious affiliation, if any. See **Figure 8**.

Table 14. Denominations of Christian Representatives, Senators, and the U.S. Population

Members, 113th Congress, U.S. Population, 2008

Christians	Representatives ^a	Senators ^b	U.S.
Protestant	53.83%	51.65%	51.3%
Evangelical Protestant	—	—	26.3%
Mainline Protestant	—	—	18.1%
Historically Black Churches	—	—	6.9%
Catholic	35.36%	27.47%	23.9%
Christian Science	0.53%	0.00%	—
Mormon	1.85%	6.59%	1.7%
Jehovah’s Witness	—	—	0.7%
Orthodox	1.06%	0.00%	0.6%
Unspecified	7.39%	1.10%	—
Other Christian	—	—	0.3%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection for Members of Congress; and Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>, for the U.S. population; and CRS calculations. For consistency and comparability, categories are based on those provided for the U.S. population by the Pew Forum. Researchers and adherents may identify affiliations and faith practices differently.

Notes: Data for Members of Congress at the beginning of the 113th Congress. U.S. population data are based on a 2008 sample of 35,000 respondents.

- a. Percentages are based on 407 Representatives who specified affiliation with a Christian denomination or tradition.
- b. Percentages are based on 92 Senators who specified affiliation with a Christian denomination or tradition.

Table 15. Religious Affiliation of Representatives at the Start of the 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Adherents	Christian ^a	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Other ^b
79 th	172	97.67%	0.58%	0%	0%	0%	1.74%
80 th	222	97.30%	0.90%	0%	0%	0%	1.80%
81 st	253	96.05%	1.98%	0%	0%	0%	1.98%
82 nd	282	95.74%	1.77%	0%	0%	0%	2.48%
83 rd	324	95.37%	1.85%	0%	0%	0%	2.78%
84 th	350	96.00%	2.00%	0%	0%	0%	2.00%
85 th	371	96.23%	2.16%	0%	0%	0%	1.62%
86 th	422	95.97%	2.37%	0%	0%	0%	1.66%
87 th	420	95.71%	2.62%	0%	0%	0%	1.67%

Congress	Adherents	Christian ^a	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Other ^b
88 th	430	96.28%	2.09%	0%	0%	0%	1.63%
89 th	430	94.42%	3.49%	0%	0%	0%	2.09%
90 th	431	94.90%	3.71%	0%	0%	0%	1.39%
91 st	430	94.88%	3.95%	0%	0%	0%	1.16%
92 nd	425	95.76%	2.82%	0%	0%	0%	1.41%
93 rd	425	94.82%	3.29%	0%	0%	0%	1.88%
94 th	427	93.21%	4.92%	0%	0%	0%	1.87%
95 th	427	92.97%	5.15%	0%	0%	0%	1.87%
96 th	431	92.58%	5.34%	0%	0%	0%	2.09%
97 th	431	92.11%	6.03%	0%	0%	0%	1.86%
98 th	431	90.95%	6.96%	0%	0%	0%	2.09%
99 th	432	91.44%	6.94%	0%	0%	0%	1.62%
100 th	431	91.42%	6.73%	0%	0%	0%	1.86%
101 st	429	90.68%	7.23%	0%	0%	0%	2.10%
102 nd	431	90.26%	7.66%	0%	0%	0%	2.09%
103 rd	430	90.93%	7.67%	0%	0%	0%	1.40%
104 th	432	93.75%	5.79%	0%	0%	0%	0.46%
105 th	430	93.72%	5.81%	0%	0%	0%	0.47%
106 th	403	94.04%	5.21%	0%	0%	0%	0.74%
107 th	399	92.98%	6.27%	0%	0%	0%	0.75%
108 th	384	92.97%	6.25%	0%	0%	0%	0.78%
109 th	389	93.06%	6.17%	0%	0%	0%	0.77%
110 th	392	91.58%	7.14%	0.26%	0.51%	0%	0.51%
111 th	396	90.91%	7.32%	0.51%	0.51%	0%	0.76%
112 th	405	92.10%	6.17%	0.49%	0.74%	0%	0.49%
113 th	407	93.12%	5.16%	0.49%	0.49%	0.25%	0.49%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations. For consistency and comparability, categories are based on those provided for the U.S. population by the Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>. Researchers and adherents may identify affiliations and faith practices differently.

- a. Christian responses identified in the CQ Press data include the following: Cases in which religion was identified as “Christian” without further specification; mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, including historically Black churches, Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox, and other Christian.
- b. Other religious affiliations reported in the CQ Press data include Quaker; Unitarian; Unitarian Universalist; Universalist; Society of Friends; and some specific identification of participation in certain Quaker Annual Meetings.

Table 16. Denominations of Christian-Affiliated Representatives, 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Christian^a	Catholic^b	Mormon^c	Orthodox	Protestant	Christian Science	Not Specified^d
79 th	168	17.26%	0.00%	0.00%	77.38%	4.76%	0.60%
80 th	216	13.43%	0.00%	0.00%	82.87%	3.24%	0.46%
81 st	243	17.70%	0.00%	0.00%	79.01%	2.88%	0.41%
82 nd	270	17.41%	0.37%	0.00%	79.26%	2.59%	0.37%
83 rd	309	17.15%	0.65%	0.00%	80.26%	1.29%	0.65%
84 th	336	16.96%	0.89%	0.00%	79.76%	1.79%	0.60%
85 th	356	17.37%	0.84%	0.00%	79.83%	1.12%	0.56%
86 th	404	21.23%	0.99%	0.00%	76.30%	0.74%	0.49%
87 th	402	21.64%	1.00%	0.00%	74.63%	1.49%	1.24%
88 th	414	20.77%	1.21%	0.00%	76.57%	1.45%	0.00%
89 th	406	22.66%	1.72%	0.00%	73.15%	1.72%	0.74%
90 th	409	22.49%	1.47%	0.49%	73.11%	1.71%	0.73%
91 st	408	22.55%	1.47%	0.74%	72.06%	2.45%	0.74%
92 nd	407	24.08%	1.47%	1.23%	70.27%	2.21%	0.74%
93 rd	403	23.57%	1.74%	0.74%	71.22%	1.99%	0.74%
94 th	398	26.63%	1.51%	0.00%	69.60%	1.76%	0.50%
95 th	397	28.21%	1.76%	0.25%	67.25%	2.27%	0.25%
96 th	399	28.32%	1.75%	1.00%	66.42%	2.26%	0.25%
97 th	397	30.23%	1.76%	1.01%	65.24%	1.26%	0.50%
98 th	392	31.38%	2.30%	1.28%	64.80%	0.00%	0.26%
99 th	395	31.39%	2.28%	1.52%	63.54%	1.01%	0.25%
100 th	394	30.96%	2.03%	1.52%	64.21%	0.76%	0.51%
101 st	389	30.59%	2.06%	1.54%	64.27%	0.77%	0.77%
102 nd	389	30.08%	2.31%	1.54%	64.27%	1.03%	0.77%
103 rd	391	29.67%	2.30%	1.02%	64.71%	1.28%	1.02%
104 th	405	31.11%	2.72%	0.49%	61.98%	2.47%	1.23%
105 th	403	31.51%	2.73%	0.50%	61.04%	2.98%	1.24%
106 th	379	31.40%	2.64%	0.53%	61.48%	2.64%	1.32%
107 th	371	31.54%	2.43%	0.54%	61.99%	2.16%	1.35%
108 th	357	31.65%	2.52%	0.28%	61.34%	2.80%	1.40%
109 th	362	33.15%	2.49%	0.55%	58.84%	3.59%	1.38%
110 th	359	33.43%	2.51%	1.11%	56.55%	5.01%	1.39%
111 th	360	35.56%	2.22%	1.39%	55.00%	5.00%	0.83%
112 th	373	33.51%	2.41%	0.80%	56.30%	6.17%	0.80%
113 th	379	35.36%	1.85%	1.06%	53.83%	7.39%	0.53%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations. For consistency and comparability, categories are based on those provided for the U.S. population by the Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>. Researchers, and adherents may identify affiliations and faith practices differently.

- a. Christian responses identified in the CQ Press data include the following: cases in which religion was identified as “Christian” without further specification; mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, including historically Black churches, Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox, and other Christian.
- b. Includes “Catholic” responses without further specification, and “Roman Catholic” responses.
- c. Includes “Mormon” responses without further specification, and “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” and “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints” responses.
- d. No Christian denomination specified.

Table 17. Religious Affiliation of Senators, 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Adherents	Christian ^a	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Other ^b
79 th	32	96.88%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.13%
80 th	45	97.78%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.22%
81 st	50	96.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%
82 nd	64	93.75%	1.56%	0.00%	0.00%	4.69%
83 rd	71	95.77%	1.41%	0.00%	0.00%	2.82%
84 th	77	93.51%	1.30%	0.00%	0.00%	5.19%
85 th	83	92.77%	1.20%	0.00%	0.00%	6.02%
86 th	97	91.75%	1.03%	0.00%	0.00%	7.22%
87 th	99	91.92%	1.01%	0.00%	0.00%	7.07%
88 th	99	90.91%	2.02%	0.00%	0.00%	7.07%
89 th	100	91.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	7.00%
90 th	100	94.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%
91 st	100	94.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%
92 nd	100	93.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%
93 rd	100	93.00%	2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%
94 th	100	91.00%	4.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%
95 th	100	92.00%	4.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%
96 th	100	88.00%	7.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%
97 th	100	91.00%	6.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.00%
98 th	100	89.00%	9.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.00%
99 th	100	89.00%	8.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.00%
100 th	100	89.00%	8.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.00%
101 st	100	89.00%	8.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.00%
102 nd	99	88.89%	8.08%	0.00%	0.00%	3.03%
103 rd	99	86.87%	10.10%	0.00%	0.00%	3.03%
104 th	99	87.88%	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	3.03%
105 th	99	88.89%	10.10%	0.00%	0.00%	1.01%

Congress	Adherents	Christian ^a	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Other ^b
106 th	98	87.76%	11.22%	0.00%	0.00%	1.02%
107 th	96	88.54%	10.42%	0.00%	0.00%	1.04%
108 th	93	87.10%	11.83%	0.00%	0.00%	1.08%
109 th	92	86.96%	11.96%	0.00%	0.00%	1.09%
110 th	93	84.95%	13.98%	0.00%	0.00%	1.08%
111 th	91	85.23%	13.64%	0.00%	0.00%	1.14%
112 th	91	85.71%	13.19%	0.00%	0.00%	1.10%
113 th	91	86.81%	12.09%	0.00%	1.10%	0.00%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations. For consistency and comparability, categories are based on those provided for the U.S. population by the Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>. Researchers, and adherents may identify affiliations and faith practices differently.

- Christian responses identified in the CQ Press data include the following: cases in which religion was identified as “Christian” without further specification; mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, including historically Black churches, Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox, and other Christian.
- Other religious affiliations reported in the CQ Press data include Quaker; Unitarian; Unitarian Universalist; Universalist; Society of Friends; and some specific identification of participation in certain Quaker Annual Meetings.

Table 18. Denominations of Christian-Affiliated Senators, 79th – 113th Congresses

Congress	Christians ^a	Catholic ^b	Mormon ^c	Orthodox	Protestant	Christian Science	Not Specified ^d
79 th	31	3.23%	0.00%	0.00%	83.87%	0.00%	12.90%
80 th	44	2.22%	4.44%	0.00%	82.22%	0.00%	8.89%
81 st	48	2.00%	4.00%	0.00%	86.00%	0.00%	4.00%
82 nd	60	3.33%	5.00%	0.00%	88.33%	0.00%	3.33%
83 rd	68	5.63%	4.23%	0.00%	84.51%	0.00%	1.41%
84 th	72	6.49%	3.90%	0.00%	80.52%	0.00%	2.60%
85 th	77	7.23%	3.61%	0.00%	79.52%	0.00%	2.41%
86 th	89	10.31%	4.12%	0.00%	75.26%	0.00%	2.06%
87 th	91	13.19%	4.40%	0.00%	82.42%	0.00%	0.00%
88 th	90	10.10%	4.04%	0.00%	75.76%	0.00%	1.01%
89 th	91	12.00%	4.00%	0.00%	73.00%	0.00%	2.00%
90 th	94	11.00%	4.00%	0.00%	76.00%	1.00%	2.00%
91 st	94	11.00%	4.00%	0.00%	78.00%	1.00%	0.00%
92 nd	93	11.83%	4.30%	0.00%	81.72%	1.08%	1.08%
93 rd	93	17.00%	0.00%	0.00%	74.00%	2.00%	0.00%
94 th	91	15.00%	4.00%	0.00%	70.00%	1.00%	1.00%
95 th	92	12.00%	4.00%	0.00%	72.00%	3.00%	1.00%
96 th	88	13.00%	4.00%	0.00%	70.00%	1.00%	0.00%

Congress	Christians ^a	Catholic ^b	Mormon ^c	Orthodox	Protestant	Christian Science	Not Specified ^d
97 th	91	17.58%	4.40%	2.20%	73.63%	1.10%	1.10%
98 th	89	16.00%	3.00%	2.00%	67.00%	1.00%	0.00%
99 th	89	18.00%	3.00%	1.00%	66.00%	0.00%	1.00%
100 th	89	18.00%	3.00%	1.00%	66.00%	0.00%	1.00%
101 st	89	18.00%	3.00%	1.00%	66.00%	0.00%	1.00%
102 nd	88	21.59%	3.41%	1.14%	72.73%	0.00%	1.14%
103 rd	86	22.22%	3.03%	0.00%	59.60%	0.00%	2.02%
104 th	87	20.20%	3.03%	3.03%	60.61%	0.00%	1.01%
105 th	88	23.23%	4.04%	3.03%	57.58%	0.00%	1.01%
106 th	86	24.49%	8.16%	0.00%	54.08%	0.00%	1.02%
107 th	85	27.06%	5.88%	2.35%	62.35%	0.00%	2.35%
108 th	81	27.16%	6.17%	2.47%	61.73%	0.00%	2.47%
109 th	80	26.25%	6.25%	2.50%	63.75%	0.00%	1.25%
110 th	79	27.85%	6.33%	1.27%	63.29%	0.00%	1.27%
111 th	78	30.67%	5.33%	1.33%	61.33%	0.00%	1.33%
112 th	78	28.21%	5.13%	1.28%	64.10%	0.00%	1.28%
113 th	79	27.47%	6.59%	0.00%	51.65%	0.00%	1.10%

Source: CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection, CRS calculations. For consistency and comparability, categories are based on those provided for the U.S. population by the Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, Washington, DC, February 2008, p. 12, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>. Researchers, and adherents may identify affiliations, and faith practices differently.

- a. Christian responses identified in the CQ Press data include the following: cases in which religion was identified as “Christian” without further specification; mainline and evangelical Protestant denominations, including historically Black churches, Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox, and other Christian.
- b. Includes “Catholic” responses without further specification, and “Roman Catholic” responses.
- c. Includes “Mormon” responses without further specification, and “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” and “Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints” responses.
- d. No Christian denomination specified.

Military Service

Table 19. Military Service by Representatives and Senators, 79th – 113th Congresses and U.S. Population

Congress	Representatives	Senators	U.S.
79 th	46.4%	43.7%	—
80 th	52.4%	53.8%	—
81 st	55.8%	57.9%	—
82 nd	58.0%	67.7%	—
83 rd	60.9%	70.8%	—

Congress	Representatives	Senators	U.S.
84 th	60.3%	68.7%	—
85 th	54.0%	75.0%	—
86 th	63.8%	69.4%	—
87 th	64.3%	68.7%	12.6%
88 th	68.8%	69.0%	—
89 th	72.6%	68.0%	—
90 th	75.2%	71.0%	—
91 st	74.7%	74.0%	—
92 nd	72.6%	78.0%	13.5%
93 rd	73.7%	79.0%	—
94 th	71.0%	80.0%	—
95 th	69.2%	78.0%	—
96 th	66.1%	76.0%	—
97 th	61.8%	77.0%	12.1%
98 th	58.8%	77.0%	—
99 th	54.5%	77.0%	—
100 th	51.3%	71.0%	—
101 st	49.4%	71.0%	—
102 nd	48.5%	70.0%	14.5%
103 rd	42.1%	63.0%	—
104 th	37.2%	56.0%	—
105 th	33.8%	51.0%	—
106 th	31.6%	45.0%	—
107 th	27.6%	39.0%	12.7%
108 th	23.7%	36.0%	—
109 th	22.4%	31.0%	—
110 th	21.1%	30.0%	—
111 th	18.9%	28.6%	—
112 th	17.9%	26.3%	9.3%
113 th	19.6%	18.1%	—

Source: Members, CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection; U.S. population, 1960-2000 decennial censuses, 2010 American Community Survey; CRS calculations.

Notes: — indicates no data. Congressional data include all responses. U.S. population data include active duty veterans only between 1960 and 2000, excluding members of military reserves and state guard organizations. Data include female veterans from 1980.

Appendix. Developing Member Data

Beyond the basic information necessary to ascertain the qualifications for office of a U.S. Senator or Representative,³⁶ the disclosure of details of a Member's race, education, previous occupation, or other characteristics over the years has been voluntary, and has not been collected by congressional or other governmental authorities. This report provides data on Member characteristics based on sources and methodologies described below.

Member Characteristics

Data on Member characteristics provided in this report are drawn from the CQ Press Electronic Library, CQ Congress Collection (hereafter CQ Press). A subscription database,³⁷ CQ Press provides data on Members serving since the 79th Congress and a range of characteristics according to the following variables: Congress; Representative or Senator; political party; state; age; religion; race/ethnicity; previous occupation; sex; and military service. CQ Press provides data on Representatives, Senators, and individuals who served as President and Vice President of the United States.³⁸ The database does not contain information on Members who have served as Delegates or Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico.

U.S. population data are based on the results of decennial censuses conducted by the Bureau of the Census between 1940 and 2010, and other official government sources as appropriate. Data on religious affiliations of the U.S. population are taken from a private source, as discussed in the "Religion" section below.

Data for all Representatives and Senators who served on the first day of the 79th – 113th Congresses were taken from the CQ Press database. Previously, the material that comprises the CQ Press data was gathered and maintained by Congressional Quarterly, Inc., through research and reporting capacities that now are a part of CQ Roll Call. CQ Press and CQ Roll Call are separate entities with different corporate ownership. Some of the data have been reported in various forms in products created by Congressional Quarterly, Inc., CQ Press, or CQ Roll Call.³⁹ Those products may also rely on data that are not included in the CQ Congress Collection.

³⁶ Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution requires that a Member of the House of Representatives be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the United States for at least seven years, and a resident of the state from which they are elected at the time they are elected. Article I, Section 3 requires that a Senator be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States for at least nine years, and resident of the state from which they are elected at the time they are elected.

³⁷ The compilation and distribution of information about members of national legislatures is carried out by non-governmental entities in at least two other countries, and relied on for official purposes by a government entity in the United Kingdom. In Canada, The Public Policy Forum, which describes itself as "an independent, not-for-profit organization," has produced a profile of Canadian Parliamentarians. See Jonathon Dignan, "(Less) Male, (Even Less) Educated, (Even Less) Experienced & (Even more) White," April 5, 2009, at <http://www.ppforum.ca/publications/lessmale-even-less-educated-even-less-experienced-%0Beven-more-white>. In the United Kingdom, since 1945, Nuffield College, Oxford University has sponsored studies of British Parliamentarians chosen in general elections. See Dennis Kavanaugh and Philip Cowley, *The British General Election of 2010* (Basingstoke, Hampshire, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). The House of Commons Library publishes a report that relies in part on Nuffield data. See Feargal McGuinness, *Social Backgrounds of MPs*, United Kingdom House of Commons Library, London, December 10, 2010, at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/SN01528>.

³⁸ Data on presidential and vice presidential service are excluded from consideration in this report.

³⁹ These products include *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1996* (Alexandria, VA: CQ Staff Directories, Inc., 1997), *CQ Weekly*, formerly known as *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*; the Congressional Quarterly, Inc. *Almanac* and *Congress and the Nation* series; biennial editions of *Politics in America: Members of Congress in Washington and at Home*, published by CQ Press; and others.

Consequently, there may be differences between data reported here and information reported in some commercial products issued by CQ Press, CQ Roll Call and other sources of congressional information.

According to CQ Press, their Member biographical data are derived from a variety of primary sources, including reporting, surveys administered to congressional offices, and official sources. CQ Press reports that it “uses multiple sources to confirm this information, including obituaries and excerpts from major newspapers, as sources do not always agree on precise dates.”⁴⁰ CQ Press does not indicate whether the data underlying their database have been collected in a consistent manner over time.

In the 79th – 86th Congresses, the Senate had 96 seats representing the 48 states admitted to the Union as of the day Congress convened. At the beginning of the 87th Congress, the number of seats increased to its current level of 100 due to the admission of Alaska and Hawaii as states. Membership of the House has been fixed at 435 seats since 1911, except for a temporary enlargement to 436 in the 86th Congress (which occurred after the first day) and 437 in the 87th Congresses to accommodate Representatives from Alaska and Hawaii. The number of House seats reverted to 435 following the 1960 Census and reapportionment that set the distribution of Representatives for the 88th Congress. On the first day of a new Congress, some seats may be vacant due to the illness or death of a Member-elect, a contested election, or other reason. On the first day of the 111th Congress in the Senate, for example, 98 Senators were present, and two seats were vacant. In the House, 433 Representatives were present on the first day of the 113th Congress and two seats were vacant. Percentages provided in figures and data tables above are based on the number of Members who were present on the first day of a Congress in each chamber. **Table 1** provides the numbers of Representatives and Senators who took seats in their respective chambers on the first day of the 79th – 113th Congresses. Due to differences in data collection or characterization, data in other studies of Member characteristics may differ from those presented in this report.

Comparing Members to the U.S. Population

Comparing the small number of Members of Congress to the population of the United States (131.7 million in 1940; 308.7 million in 2010) poses some challenges. Such challenges result, in part, from differences in scale. Others arise as a consequence of the way information about Members of Congress or the U.S. population is collected, or how the information has been categorized over time. Since, in some instances, described below, there may be no direct comparison between the types of data available describing characteristics of Representatives, Senators and the U.S. population, any comparison between Members and the broader American public is potentially subject to a wide range of interpretations. Conclusions should be drawn from the data provided here with care. Issues that inform the understanding, utility, and comparability of the data presented in this report include the following:

Education

CQ Press data provide the academic degrees Members have earned (high school completion, undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees). The Census Bureau expresses educational attainment among the U.S. population as percentages of individuals aged 25 years and older who have completed four years of high school or four or more years of college. The Census Bureau

⁴⁰ CQ Press, “Codebook for CQ Congress Collection Data Exports” (Washington: CQ Press, 2011), unnumbered pages.

also provides a measurement of the median years of schooling completed by the population aged 25 years and older.

Previous Occupation

Questions arise when comparing the occupation of Members to occupations pursued in the United States, but also when comparing the work of Members before they arrived in Congress.

With regard to the comparison of Members to constituents, is the proper comparison between the American public and Members in their roles as government officials, or to the work they did before taking office? In addition, Census and other government efforts to categorize work have changed to reflect the dynamic nature of work activity, which may limit or preclude comparison of occupations over time. Focusing on Member characteristics, what might previous occupations reveal about Members who have served in Congress for many years, or otherwise left other professions to pursue elective office prior to their congressional service? If the focus is on Members in their official capacities, in what ways might that work be categorized?

The CQ Press data provide previous occupations reported by individual Members, organized by broad category identified as “Previous Occupation.” Occupations previously practiced by Members might fit into one or more of the subcategories CQ Press identifies. For example, CQ Press provides previous occupational subcategories that include congressional aide, law enforcement, and military; each of these arguably could be included in another subcategory CQ Press provides, entitled “public service/politics.” In addition to that concern, the extent to which the public service/politics subcategory includes or excludes Members prior elected service in state or local offices (which are common paths to congressional careers) cannot be determined.

Questions regarding the most appropriate manner of identifying congressional work experience, coupled with changes in the collection of occupational data for the nation, may raise questions about the comparability of congressional and U.S. population data across time. Due to the diversity of employment in the U.S. population, and the challenges of comparing that data to CQ Press information on Members, comparisons between the occupations of Members and those of the U.S. population at large are not provided in this report.

Race and Ethnicity

In the census data, race and ethnicity are currently based on self-identification. CQ Press data, which are collected from a number of sources including self-identification, reports only one response for this category for Members; Members, or other sources, may identify more detailed racial or ethnic affiliations elsewhere. Over time, Congress has required the Census Bureau to deploy a broader array of categories in the decennial censuses, and to allow respondents to choose more than one category. These changes may raise questions about the comparability of congressional and U.S. population data, whether at a specific moment in time or across the span of the Congresses examined.

Religion

Comparing Member religious affiliation to that of the U.S. population poses a number of challenges for several reasons. First, there is no authoritative categorization of American religious practice that covers the period since 1945 in a consistent manner that includes consideration of all faiths, denominations, and traditions. This is due, in part, to the prohibition placed on the Census

Bureau from collecting religious affiliation data.⁴¹ Second, the data that are available from private sources for the U.S. population are not readily comparable to the data CQ Press gathers on the religious affiliations of Members of Congress as they chose to identify themselves. CQ Press's Member information includes broad listings that do not identify different traditions within broader denominations. Another challenge is the lack of consistent information on the number of American observers of some religions, or the incomplete collection of data over time. Most efforts to categorize religious affiliation in the United States attempt to identify adherents within the mainline and evangelical traditions of Protestantism,⁴² or affiliation with historically Black churches, but no such distinction is possible regarding Member affiliation, based on the CQ Press data. With regard to the U.S. population, it is possible to identify information on the number of Christian adherents in the United States since 1945, but it is more difficult to identify those who follow Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu faiths, or those who identify no religious affiliation. Some of this is explained in part by the preponderance of Americans who identify themselves as Christians, or as members of Christian churches. As a consequence, it is only possible to compare religious adherents in the House and Senate in the 113th Congress, and the U.S. population in 2008. U.S. population data are based on the research of the Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life.⁴³

Military Service

As with previous occupation, questions arise when considering the military service of Members of Congress, or comparing that service to the U.S. population.

Some Members come to Congress after working in other occupations, including having served in military service. Members may continue to serve in the military during their terms of office. CQ Press provides military categories as follows: did not serve, or service in the U.S. Air Force; U.S. Army; U.S. Marine Corps; or U.S. Navy, but does not distinguish whether the service occurred before, during, or after a Member's term of office. Despite its stated categorizations, the CQ Press data provide as military service responses that include reported service in the reserves; state guards and militias; military components (e.g., "ROTC," field artillery, or volunteer infantry); and specific conflicts (e.g., Spanish-American War). In addition, the CQ Press data provide activity that may or may not constitute military service, including work for the U.S. Food Administration and War Trade Board, or the Public Health Service, or service with the "U.S. General Hospital." This report provides data on Members identified in the CQ Press data as having military service regardless of type. As a consequence it is possible that the extent of Member military service may be overstated in some instances.

An additional set of challenges arises when comparing the military service of Members with the service of the general population. Data on the number of Americans serving in the military is not readily available. Military service is a defining characteristic of veteran status, but data on veteran

⁴¹ The Census Bureau is prohibited by law "from asking a question on religious affiliation on a mandatory basis." See <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/religion.htm>. For discussion on the challenges of tracking religious affiliation over time, see Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, *Religion in America*, 6th ed. (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010); and Brian Streensland, Jerry Z. Park, and Mark D. Regnerus, et al., "The Measure of American Religion: Toward Improving the State of the Art," *Social Forces*, vol. 79, no. 1 (September 2000), pp. 291-318.

⁴² Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnson, eds., *The Variety of American Evangelism* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991).

⁴³ Pew Forum on Religious & Public Life, *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Affiliation: Diverse and Dynamic*, February, 2008, at <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>.

status are also problematic. The statutory definition of veterans⁴⁴ appears to exclude service in reserve and state guard units, which precludes comparison between data collected by the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the general population and the CQ Press Member data. Instead, this report relies on data provided by the Census Bureau, which published veteran information in the 1960-2000 decennial censuses,⁴⁵ and continues to collect veterans' data through the American Community Survey (ACS).⁴⁶ Census data excluded reservists, members of state guards, and women from its tabulations of veterans until 1980, and took steps to clarify veteran status by age, and type of military service, in most censuses. As a consequence, direct comparability between Census Bureau data and the CQ Press data may be problematic, due to data inconsistencies in both collections.

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⁴⁴ 38 U.S.C. 101.

⁴⁵ The Census Bureau collected, but did not publish veterans' data in the 1910, and 1930-1950 Censuses due to "the high rate of nonresponse and other reasons." U.S. Bureau of the census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1960. Detailed Characteristics. United States Summary*, Final Report PC (1) - 1D, Washington, DC: GPO, 1963, pp. xix-xx.

⁴⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *History and Evolution of Veteran Status Questions*, Washington, DC, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/veterans/about/history.html>.

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